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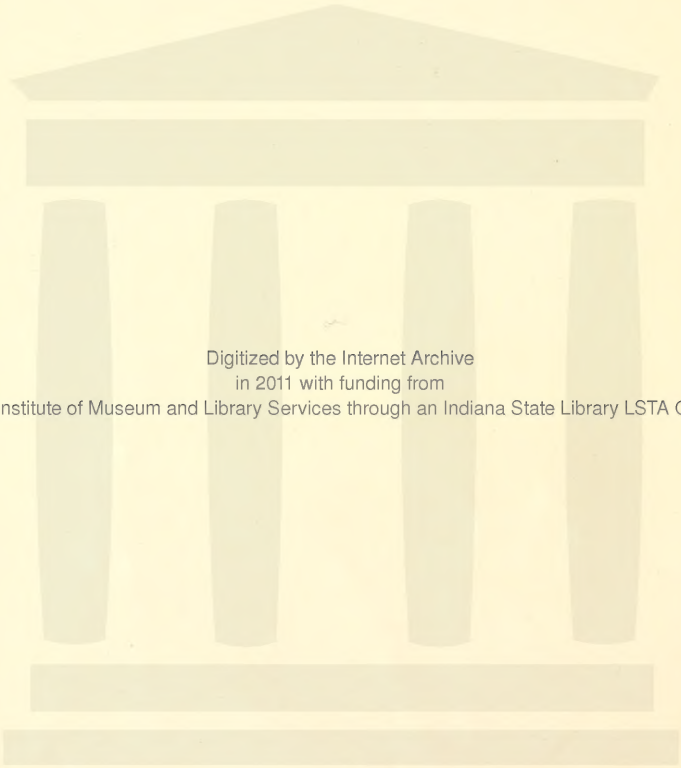
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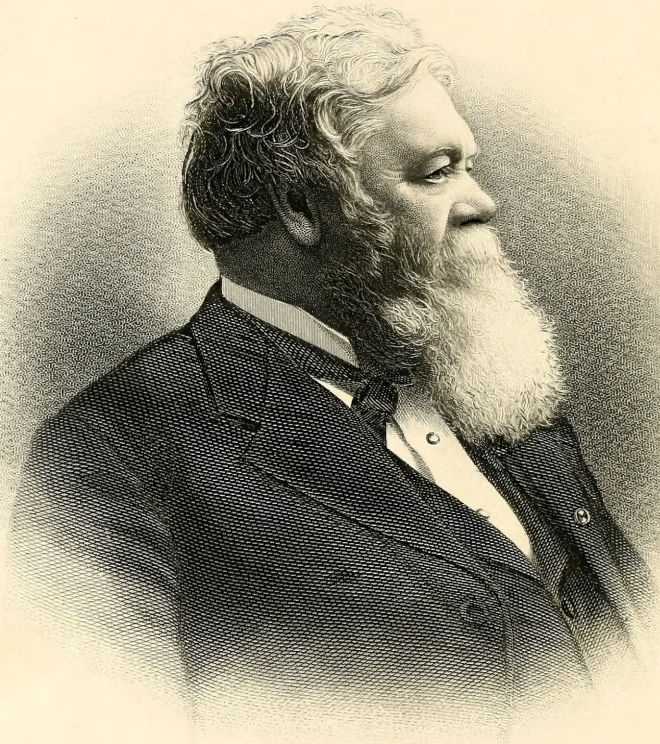
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Faithfully Yours,

Benj: Perley Poore

# PERLEY'S

# REMINISCENCES

OF SIXTY YEARS IN THE

# NATIONAL METROPOLIS

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*Illustrating the Wit, Humor, Genius, Eccentricities, Jealousies, Ambitions and Intrigues of the Brilliant Statesmen, Ladies, Officers, Diplomats, Lobbyists and other noted Celebrities of the World that gather at the Centre of the Nation; describing imposing Inauguration Ceremonies, Gala Day Festivities, Army Reviews, &c., &c., &c.*


BY BEN: PERLEY POORE,

*The Veteran Journalist, Clerk of the Senate Printing Records, Editor of the Congressional Directory, and Author of various Works.*


**Illustrated.**

VOL. I.


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# PREFACE.

THE public favor with which the journalistic writings of the subscriber have been received prompted the publication of these volumes. Their object is to give personal details concerning prominent men and women in social and political life at the National Metropolis since he has known it. He has especially endeavored to portray those who "in Congress assembled" have enacted the laws, and those who have interpreted and enforced the provisions under which the United States has advanced, during the past sixty years, from comparative infancy into the vigor of mature manhood, and has successfully defended its own life against a vigorous attempt at its destruction.

In chronicling what has transpired within his personal recollection at the National Metropolis, he has gathered what "waifs" he has found floating on the sea of chat, in the whirlpools of gossip, or in the quiet havens of conversation. Some of these may be personal—piquantly personal, perhaps—but the mighty public has had an appetite for gossipings about prominent men and measures ever since the time when the old Athenians crowded to hear the plays of Aristophanes.

The subscriber is aware that some who write of prominent persons and political events indulge too much in sycophantic flattery, while others have their brains addled by brooding on some fancied wrong, or their minds have lost their even poise by dwelling on insane reforms or visionary projects. All this may have its use, but the subscriber has preferred to look at things in a

more cheerful way, to pluck roses rather than nettles, and neither to throw filth nor to blow trumpets.

While the Republic has preserved with commendable pride the histories of her statesmen and her martial defenders, it is well that the memories of those of the gentler sex, who have from time to time taken prominent part in shaping the destinies of the nation, should also be remembered. This work will give, it is hoped, an idea of stirring events in both political and social life, of the great men and the fascinating women who have figured in Washington during the past six decades. Those who were too well acquainted with these personal details to think of recording them are fast passing away, and some account of them cannot but interest younger generations, while it will not fail to profit the older politicians, publicists, and journalists.

The great difficulty in the compilation of the "Reminiscences" has been the selection from the masses of material accumulated in diaries, autograph letters, and scrap-books containing published literary matter. To have given a connected political and social history of what has transpired at the National Metropolis during the past sixty years would have required a dozen volumes, so the most conspicuous features only have been here and there selected.

Confident of the exact truthfulness of the sketches here given, this work is presented, without apologies, to a generous public as the result of very extensive observation.

BEN: PERLEY POORE.

INDIAN HILL FARM,
Near Newburyport, Mass.

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# PERLEY'S REMINISCENCES.

VOL. I.

# CHAPTER I.

## JOHN QUINCY ADAMS BECOMES PRESIDENT.

THE TENTH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION—A POLITICAL BARGAIN—ELECTION OF PRESIDENT—A SCENE IN THE HOUSE—INAUGURATION OF J. Q. ADAMS—THE ADAMS ADMINISTRATION—THE MISTRESS OF THE WHITE HOUSE—THE PRESIDENT'S PRIVATE SECRETARY—SOCIAL LIFE AT THE WHITE HOUSE—PRESIDENT ADAMS' DAILY LIFE—HENRY CLAY AS SECRETARY OF STATE—THE RIVAL CANDIDATES—THE DEATH OF TWO EX-PRESIDENTS.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS was elected President of the United States by the House of Representatives on February 9th, 1825. At the tenth popular election for President, during the previous autumn, there had been four candidates: Andrew Jackson, then a Senator from Tennessee, who received ninety-nine electoral votes; John Quincy Adams, of Massachusetts, then Secretary of State under President Monroe, who received eighty-four electoral votes; William H. Crawford, of Georgia, then Secretary of the Treasury, who received forty-one electoral votes, and Henry Clay, of Kentucky, then Speaker of the House of Representatives, who received thirty-seven electoral votes—in all two hundred and sixty-one electoral votes. As neither candidate had received the requisite majority of one hundred and thirty-one electoral votes, the election of a President devolved upon the House of Representatives, in which body each State would have one vote. As the Constitution required that the choice of the

House be confined to the three highest candidates on the list of those voted for by the electors, and as Mr. Clay was not one of the three, he was excluded. Exercising, as he did, great control over his supporters, it was within his power to transfer their strength to



JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

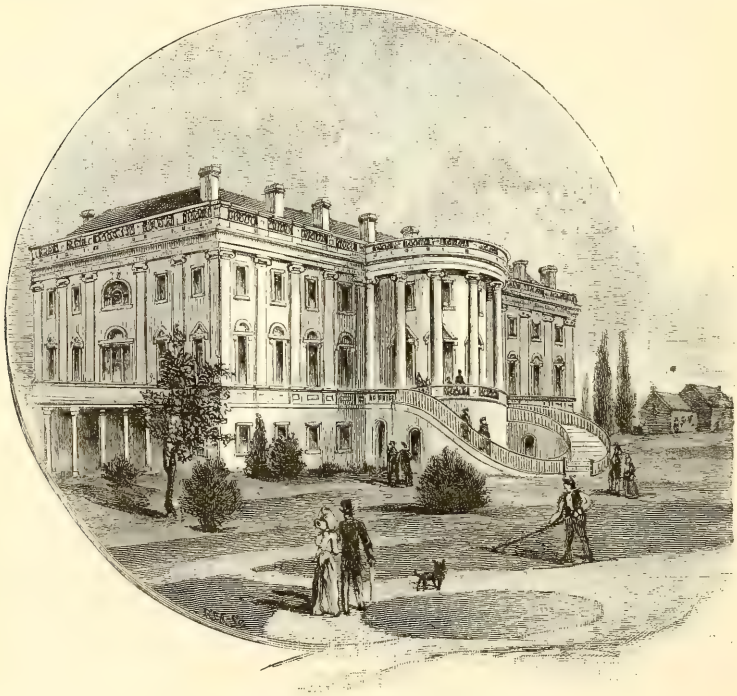
either Adams or Jackson, thus deciding the election. The Legislature of his State, Kentucky, had to a certain degree instructed him, by passing a joint resolution declaring its preference for Jackson over Adams, and Jackson always believed that had he accepted over-

tures made to him, for the promise of the Department of State to Mr. Clay, that would have insured his election.

Mr. Clay decided, however, to request his friends to support Mr. Adams. To one of them he wrote: "Mr. Adams, you well know, I should never have selected if at liberty to draw from the whole mass of our citizens for a President. But there is no danger of his election now or in time to come. Not so of his competitor, of whom I cannot believe that killing two thousand five hundred Englishmen at New Orleans qualifies for the various, difficult, and complicated duties of the Chief Magistracy." Many believed, however, that a bargain was made between Adams and Clay by which the latter received, as a consideration for transferring to the former the votes of Kentucky, Ohio, and Missouri, the position of Secretary of State. The charge was distinctly made by Mr. George Kremer, a Representative from Pennsylvania, and as positively denied by Mr. Clay. General Jackson wrote to Major Lewis: "So, you see, the Judas of the West has closed the contract and will receive the thirty pieces of silver. His end will be the same. Was there ever witnessed such a barefaced corruption in any country before?"

When the Senate and the House of Representatives met in joint convention to count the electoral votes it was found (as every one present had known for months) that no one had received the requisite majority. This was formally announced by Vice-President Daniel D. Tompkins, who also declared that John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina, had been elected Vice-President. The Senate, headed by the Vice-President and its Secretary, Charles Cutts, then retired, and the House proceeded to ballot for President.

The election was by States. Each State delegation appointed one of their number to act as chairman, collect their votes, and report the result. Whoever in each delegation received the most votes was reported as the choice of that delegation to the tellers—one from each State—who sat in parties of twelve at two tables.



SOUTH FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE, 1825.

Daniel Webster, the teller of Massachusetts, was appointed by the tellers at one of the tables to announce the result of the ballot, and John Randolph, the teller of Virginia, was appointed to the same service at the other table. The votes of most of the States were matters of confident calculation, but those of others

were in some degree doubtful, and there was intense interest manifested as their votes were announced. At last, when the twenty-four States had voted, Mr. Webster announced, in his deep voice, that thirteen States had voted for John Quincy Adams, seven States had voted for Andrew Jackson, and four States had voted for William H. Crawford. Mr. Speaker Clay then announced, in sonorous tones: "John Quincy Adams, having received a majority of the votes cast, is duly elected President of the United States for four years, from the 4th of March next ensuing."



GENERAL JACKSON.

A shout arose from the occupants of the galleries, which Mr. McDuffie promptly asked might be cleared. The vote was carried, and a young man, who was Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, mounting to the broad stone cornice, which ran around the hall outside of the floor of the galleries, but on a level with them, exclaimed, as he walked along: "The Speaker orders the galleries to be cleared; all must retire. Clear the galleries!" The command was

obeyed, to the astonishment of some of the foreign ministers present, who had been accustomed to see armed guards at such assemblages, and often to witness their unsuccessful attempts to move the populace. The House soon afterward adjourned.

That evening President Monroe gave a public reception at the White House, which had just been rebuilt, after having been burned by the British army—in 1814. The two candidates, Mr. Adams, the elect, and General Jackson, the defeated, accidentally met in the East Room. General Jackson, who was escorting a lady, promptly extended his hand, saying pleasantly: "How do you do, Mr. Adams? I give you my left hand, for the right, as you see, is devoted to the fair. I hope you are very well, sir." All this was gallantly and heartily said and done. Mr. Adams took the General's hand, and said, with chilling coldness: "Very well, sir; I hope General Jackson is well!" The military hero was genial and gracious, while the unamiable diplomat was as cold as an iceberg.

The inauguration of Mr. Adams, on the 4th of March, 1825, was the most imposing demonstration ever witnessed at Washington up to that time. President Monroe called for his successor and they rode together to the Capitol, escorted by the District uniformed militia and by a cavalcade of citizens marshaled by Daniel Carroll, of Duddington, General John Mason, General Walter Smith, and General Walter Jones, four prominent residents. On reaching the Capitol the President-elect was received with military honors by a battalion of the Marine Corps. He was then escorted by a committee of Senators to the Senate Chamber, where the oath of office was administered to the Vice-President-elect, John C. Calhoun. The dignitaries pres-

ent then moved in procession to the hall of the House of Representatives, on the floor of which were the Senators and Representatives, the Supreme Court, the diplomatic corps, officers of the army and navy, and many prominent officials, while the galleries were filled with handsomely dressed ladies and gentlemen. Mr. Adams read his inaugural address from the Speaker's desk, after which the oath of office was administered to him by Chief Justice Marshall. Salutes were fired from the Navy Yard and the Arsenal, and the new President was escorted to his house, on F Street, where he that evening received his friends, for whom generous supplies of punch and wines were hospitably provided.

President Adams, although at heart instigated by a Puritan intolerance of those who failed to conform with himself, was a true patriot, and as a public man was moved by the highest moral motives. He was a great statesman in so far as the comprehension of the principles of government and a mastery of a wide field of information were concerned, but he could not practically apply his knowledge. Instead of harmonizing the personal feuds between the friends of those who had been candidates with him, he antagonized each one with his Administration at the earliest possible moment, and before the expiration of his first year in the White House he had wrecked the Republican party left by Monroe, as completely as his father had wrecked the Federal party established by Washington.

The President, when in London, had married Miss Louisa Catherine Johnson. Her father was an American by birth, but just before the Revolution he went to England, where he resided until after the independence of the Colonies had been recognized. Mrs. Adams was well educated, highly accomplished, and well quali-

fied to preside over the domestic affairs at the White House. She had four children—three sons and one daughter—of whom one only, Mr. Charles Francis Adams, survived her. It is related, as evidence of her good sense, that on one occasion Mrs. Mason, of Analostan Island, called, accompanied by two or three other ladies belonging to the first families of Virginia, to enlist Mrs. Adams in behalf of her son-in-law, Lieutenant Cooper (afterward Adjutant-General of the United States Army, and subsequently of the Confederate forces), who wanted to be detailed as an aide-de-camp on the staff of General Macomb. Mrs. Adams heard their request and then replied: "Truly, ladies, though Mesdames Maintenon and Pompadour are said to have controlled the military appointments of their times, I do not think such matters appertain to women; but if they did and I had any influence with Mr. Adams, it should be given to Mrs. Scott, with whom I became acquainted while traveling last summer."

Mr. Adams' private secretary was his son, John Adams, who soon made himself very obnoxious to the friends of General Jackson. One evening Mr. Russell Jarvis, who then edited the Washington *Telegraph*, a newspaper which advocated Jackson's election, attended a "drawing room" at the White House, escorting his wife and a party of visiting relatives from Boston. Mr. Jarvis introduced those who were with him to Mrs. Adams, who received them courteously, and they then passed on into the East Room. Soon afterward they found themselves standing opposite to Mr. John Adams, who was conversing with the Rev. Mr. Stetson. "Who is that lady?" asked Mr. Stetson. "That," replied Mr. John Adams, in a tone so loud that the party heard it, "is the wife of one Russell Jarvis, and if he knew

how contemptibly he is viewed in this house they would not be here." The Bostonians at once paid their respects to Mrs. Adams and withdrew, Mr. Jarvis having first ascertained from Mr. Stetson that it was Mr. John Adams who had insulted them. A few days afterward Mr. Jarvis sent a note to Mr. John Adams, demanding an explanation, by a friend of his, Mr. McLean. Mr. Adams told Mr. McLean that he had no apology to make to Mr. Jarvis, and that he wished no correspondence with him.

A week later Mr. John Adams went to the Capitol to deliver messages from the President to each house of Congress. Having delivered that addressed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, he was going through the rotunda toward the Senate Chamber, when he was overtaken by Mr. Jarvis, who pulled his nose and slapped his face. A scuffle ensued, but they were quickly parted by Mr. Dorsey, a Representative from Maryland. President Adams notified Congress in a special message of the occurrence, and the House appointed a select committee of investigation. Witnesses were examined and elaborate reports were drawn up, but neither the majority nor the minority recommended that any punishment be inflicted upon Mr. Jarvis.

Mr. John Adams was married, while his father occupied the White House, to his mother's niece, Miss Mary Hellen, of Washington. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Dr. Hawley, of St. John's Church, and General Ramsay, who was one of the groomsmen, is authority for the statement that the President, usually so grave and unsocial, unbent for the nonce, and danced at the wedding ball in a Virginia reel with great spirit.

The foreign diplomats were recognized as leaders in Washington society, and one of the Secretaries of Legation created a sensation by appearing on Pennsylvania Avenue mounted on a velocipede imported from



THE VELOCIPEDE OF 1827.

London. Pennsylvania Avenue was then bordered with scraggy poplar trees, which had been planted under the direction of President Jefferson.

Mr. Adams found the furniture of the White House

in a dilapidated condition. Thirty thousand dollars had been appropriated by Congress for the purchase of new furniture during the Administration of Mr. Monroe; but his friend, Colonel Lane, Commissioner of Public Buildings, to whom he had intrusted it, became insolvent, and died largely in debt to the Government, having used the money for the payment of his debts, instead of procuring furniture. When an appropriation of fourteen thousand dollars was made, to be expended under the direction of Mr. Adams, for furniture, he took charge of it himself. This was severely criticised by the Democratic press, as was the purchase of a billiard table for the White House, about which so much was said that Mr. John Adams finally paid the bill from his own pocket.

Mrs. Adams won popularity at Washington by the graceful manner in which she presided over the hospitalities of the White House. The stiff formality of the "drawing-rooms" of Mrs. Washington and Mrs. John Adams, and the free-and-easy "receptions" of Mr. Jefferson's daughters, had been combined by Mrs. Madison into what she christened "levees," at which all ceremonious etiquette was banished. Mrs. Monroe, who had mingled in the fashionable circles of London and Paris, as well as of her native city of New York, had continued these evening "levees," and Mrs. Adams, in turn, not only kept up the custom, but improved the quality of the refreshments, which were handed around on waiters by servants.

Mr. Adams used to rise between four and six o'clock, according to the season, and either take a ride on horseback or walk to the Potomac River, where he bathed, remaining in the water for an hour or more in the summer. Returning to the White House, he read two

chapters of the Bible and then glanced over the morning papers until nine, when he breakfasted. From ten until four he remained in the Executive Office, presiding over Cabinet meetings, receiving visitors, or considering questions of state. Then, after a long walk, or a short ride on horseback, he would sit down to dine at half-past five, and after dinner resume his public duties.

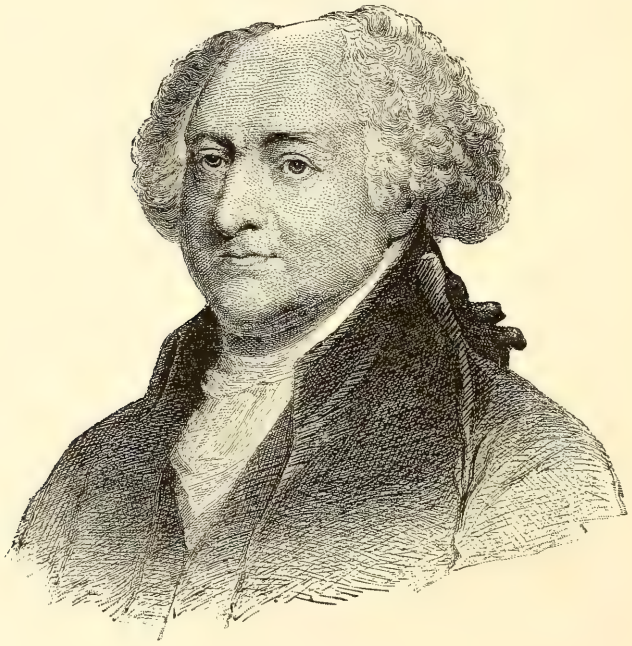
On one occasion Mr. Adams imperiled his life by attempting to cross the Potomac in a small boat, accompanied by his son John and by his steward, Michael Antoine Ginsta, who had entered his service at Amsterdam in 1814. Intending to swim back, they had taken off nearly all of their clothes, which were in the boat. When about half-way across, a gust of wind came sweeping down the Potomac, the boat filled with water, and they were forced to abandon it and swim for their lives to the Virginia shore. By taking what garments each one had on, Antoine managed to clothe himself decently, and started across the bridge to Washington. During his absence, Mr. Adams and his son swam in the river, or walked to and fro on the shore. At last, after they had been about three hours undressed, Antoine made his appearance with a carriage and clothing, so they were able to return to Washington. Mr. Adams purchased that day a watch, which he gave Antoine to replace one which he had lost in the boat, and alluded to the adventure in his journal that night as "a humiliating lesson and a solemn warning not to trifle with danger." A few weeks later a Revolutionary veteran named Shoemaker, went in to bathe at Mr. Adams' favorite spot, the Sycamores, was seized with cramp, and was drowned. The body was not recovered until the next morning while Mr. Adams

was in the water; but the incident did not deter him from taking his solitary morning baths, which he regarded as indispensable to health. Mr. Adams took great interest in arboriculture, and was a constant reader of Evelyn. He had planted in the grounds of the White House the acorns of the cork-oak, black walnuts, peach, plum, and cherry stones, apple and pear seeds, and he watched their germination and growth with great interest. A botanic garden was established under his patronage, and naval officers were instructed to bring home for distribution the seeds of such grains and vegetables as it might seem desirable to naturalize. The seeds thus collected were carefully distributed through members of Congress, and several important varieties of vegetables were thus introduced. Down to the present day the yearly distribution of seeds to rural constituents is an important item of Congressional duty.

Henry Clay was the *premier* and the most important member of Mr. Adams' cabinet. He evidently regarded the Department of State as a stepping-stone to the Executive Mansion, and hoped that he would be in time promoted, as Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and John Quincy Adams. The foreign policy of the Administration, which encouraged the appointment of a Minister to represent the United States in the Congress of American Republics at Panama, although in accordance with the "Monroe Doctrine," was denounced as Federalism. Mr. Clay, who had never been a Federalist, did not wish to be regarded as a restorer of the old Federal party, and he accordingly began to create the Whig party, of which he naturally became the leader.

Mr. Clay made a good Secretary of State, but his

place was in Congress, for he was formed by nature for a popular orator. He was tall and thin, with a rather small head, and gray eyes, which peered forth less luminously than would have been expected in one possessing such eminent control of language. His nose was straight, his upper lip long, and his under jaw

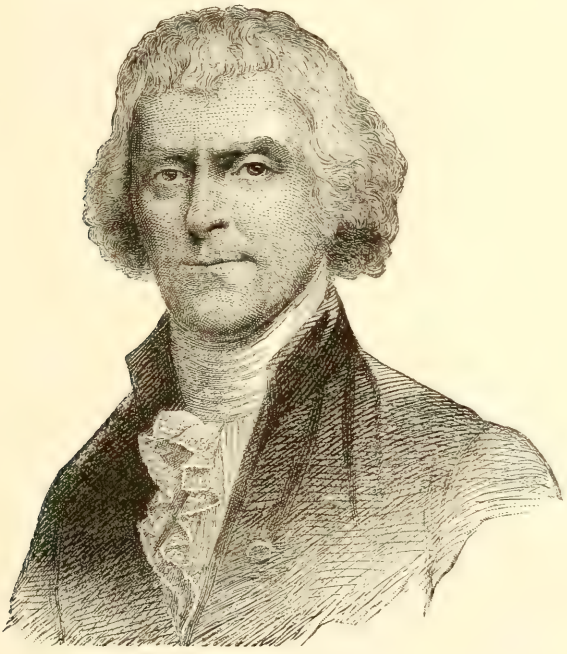


JOHN ADAMS.

light. His mouth, of generous width, straight when he was silent, and curving upward at the corners as he spoke or smiled, was singularly graceful, indicating more than any other feature the elastic play of his mind. When he enchained large audiences, his features were lighted up by a winning smile, the gestures of his long arms were graceful, and the gentle accents

of his mellow voice were persuasive and winning. Yet there has never been a more imperious despot in political affairs than Mr. Clay. He regarded himself as the head-centre of his party—*L'état, c'est moi*—and he wanted everything utilized for his advancement.

General Jackson was meanwhile being brought



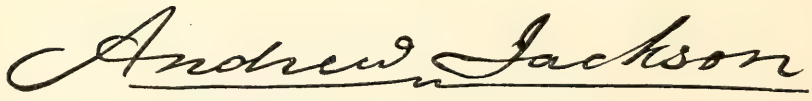
THOMAS JEFFERSON.

before the public, under the direction of Aaron Burr, Martin Van Buren, and Edward Livingston, as a "man of the people." They had persuaded him to resign his seat in the Senate of the United States, where he might have made political mistakes, and retire to his farm in Tennessee, while they flooded the country with accounts of his military exploits and his social

good qualities. Daniel Webster told Samuel Breck, as the latter records in his diary, that he knew more than fifty members of Congress who had expended and pledged all they were worth in setting up presses and employing other means to forward Jackson's election.

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, two of the three survivors of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, passed hence on the Fourth of July, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of their signing the Magna Charta of our Republic. Their names had been inseparably connected in the minds and upon the lips of the people, as their labors were united in bringing about the events of the Revolution and its final triumph. Mr. Jefferson was the writer, Mr. Adams the orator, of the Congress of '76. The one penned the Declaration of Independence, the other was pronounced "the pillar of its support and its ablest advocate and defender." Mr. Jefferson called Mr. Adams "the Colossus of the Congress," the most earnest, laborious member of the body, and its animating spirit. For the loss of these men, though they fell as a ripe shock of corn falleth—both having arrived at an advanced age—Mr. Adams over ninety—the whole nation clothed itself in mourning.

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ANDREW JACKSON, born in North Carolina, March 15th, 1767; Representative in Congress and Senator from Tennessee; Judge of the State Supreme Court of Tennessee; Major-General; Governor of Florida; President of the United States, 1829–1837; died near Nashville, Tennessee, January 8th, 1845.

## CHAPTER II.

### TRAVELING IN "YE OLDEN TIME."

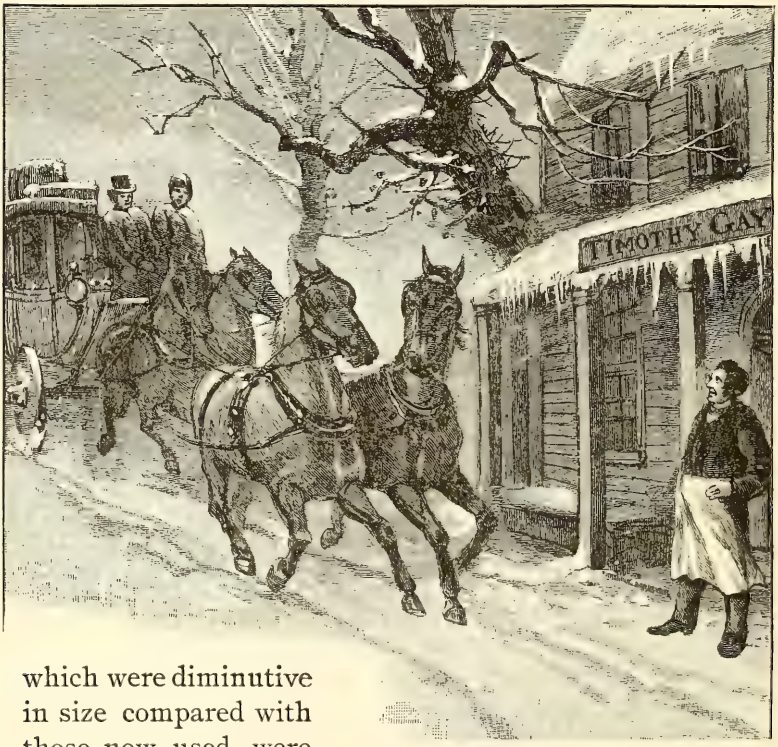
TRAVEL BY STAGE AND STEAMBOAT—BOSTON TO PROVIDENCE—THE OLD TOWN OF PROVIDENCE—THE LONG ISLAND SOUND STEAMERS—NEW YORK CITY—NEW YORK TO PHILADELPHIA—PHILADELPHIA TO WASHINGTON—WASHINGTON HOTEL LIFE—EXPENSES OF LIVING—THE METROPOLIS OF THE UNION—THE NATIONAL CAPITAL—WORKS OF ART—THE ROTUNDA—FREE-MASONRY—THE MORGAN EXCITEMENT—THEATRICAL—DIVISION OF THE FRIENDS' SOCIETY.

THE old stage route between Boston and New York, before John Quincy Adams was President, passed through Worcester, Springfield, Hartford, and Norwalk. Passengers paid ten dollars for a seat and were fifty-six hours or more on the road. This gave way about 1825 to the steamboat line via Providence, which for five dollars carried passengers from Boston to New York in twenty-four hours.

Stage books for the Providence line were kept in Boston at offices in different parts of the city, where those wishing to go the next day registered their names. These names were collected and brought to the central stage office in the Marlboro Hotel at ten o'clock each night, where they were arranged into stage-loads, each made up from those residing in the same part of the city. At four o'clock in the morning a man started from the stage office in a chaise to go about and wake up the passengers, that the stage need not be kept

waiting. The large brass door knockers were vigorously plied, and sometimes quite a commotion was caused by "waking up the wrong passenger."

In due time the stage made its appearance, with its four spirited horses, and the baggage was put on. Trunks,




ARRIVAL AT DEDHAM.

which were diminutive in size compared with those now used, were put on the rack behind, securely strapped; valises and packages were consigned to the depths of a receptacle beneath the driver's seat, and bandboxes were put on the top. The back seat was generally given to ladies and elderly gentlemen, while young men usually sought a seat on top of the stage by the side of the driver. When the passengers had

been "picked up," the stages returned to the stage office, where the way-bills were perfected and handed to the drivers. As the Old South clock was striking five, whips were cracked, and the coaches started at the rate of ten miles an hour, stopping for breakfast at Timothy Gay's tavern in Dedham, where many of the passengers visited the bar to imbibe Holland gin and sugar-house molasses—a popular morning beverage.

Breakfast over, away the stages went over the good turnpike road at a rapid pace. Those who were fellow passengers, even if strangers to one another, gradually entered into conversation, and generally some one of them was able to impart information concerning the route. Occasionally the stage would rattle into a village, the driver giving warning blasts upon his long tin horn that he claimed the right of way, and then dash up to a wayside inn, before which would be in waiting a fresh team of horses to take the place of those which had drawn the coach from the previous stopping-place. Time was always afforded those passengers who desired to partake of libations at the tavern bar, and old travelers used to see that their luggage was safe.

Providence was in due time reached, and the procession of stages whirled along the narrow street beneath the bluff, swaying heavily with the irregularities of the road. The steamboats lay at India Point, just below the town, where immense quantities of wood were piled up, for each boat consumed between thirty and forty cords on a trip through Long Island Sound.

The stages used to reach India Point about half-past eleven o'clock, and the boat would start for New York precisely at twelve. There were no state-rooms, the passengers occupying berths, and at the dinner and supper the captain of the boat occupied the head of the

table, having seated near him any distinguished passengers. Occasionally there was an opposition line with sharp rivalries, and at one time a then rising New Yorker, Cornelius Vanderbilt, carried passengers from New York to Boston for one dollar.

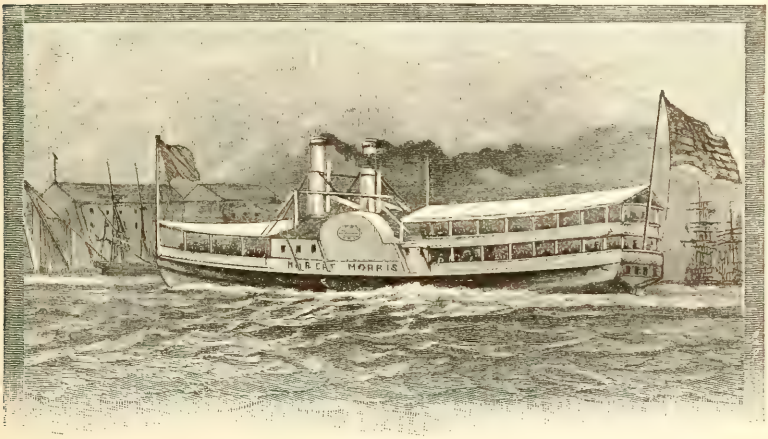
On arriving at New York, the passengers had to look out for their luggage, and either engage hacks or handcartmen, who for twenty-five cents would carry a trunk to any part of the city. The city then, be it remembered, did not reach up Manhattan Island above the vicinity of Broome or Spring Streets, although there were beyond that the villages of Greenwich, Bloomingdale, Yorkville, and Harlem. The City Hotel, on Broadway, just above Trinity Churchyard, Bunker's Hotel, lower down, and the Washington Hotel, which occupied the site of the Stewart building above the Park, were the principal public houses. The Boston stages stopped at Hall's North American Hotel, at the corner of Bayard Street and the Bowery, and there were many boarding-houses where transient guests were accommodated.

From New York, travelers southward went by steamboat to Elizabethport, where they were transferred to stages, and crossed New Jersey to Bordentown on the Delaware River, where a steamer was in waiting to transport them to Philadelphia. This was a long and fatiguing day's journey, and a majority of travelers remained over a day in Philadelphia, where the hotels were excellent and there were many objects of attraction.

Leaving Philadelphia in a steamboat, passengers went down the Delaware to New Castle, whence they crossed in stages to Frenchtown on the Elk River, and there re-embarked on steamers, which took them down

and around to Baltimore, another long and fatiguing day's trip. At each change from boat to stage, or from stage to boat, passengers had to see that their baggage was transferred, and it was generally necessary to give a quarter to the porter. Baggage checks and the checking of baggage were then unknown.

Between Baltimore and Washington there were opposition lines of stages and a good turnpike road. There had been, when I first went over the road, some daring

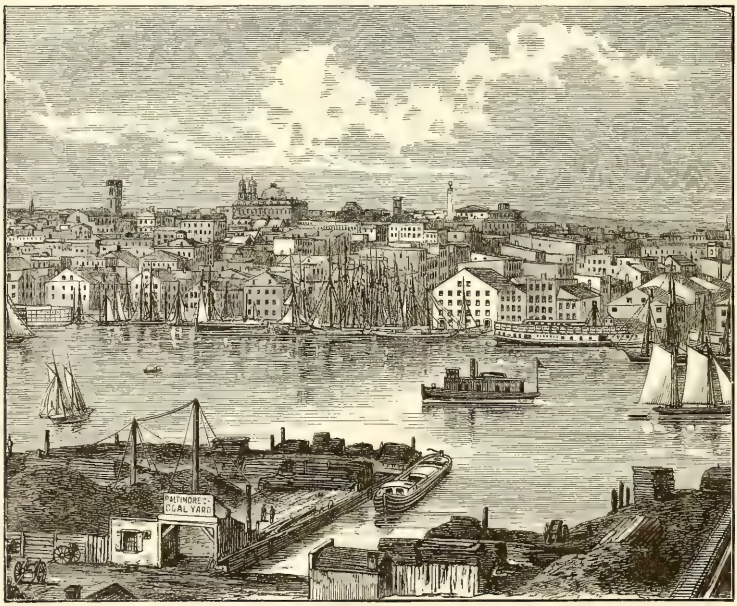



DOWN THE DELAWARE

robberies by "road agents," and the mail coaches were protected by a guard, who occupied a perch on the roof over the boot and was armed with a blunderbuss. This weapon had a funnel-shaped barrel, a flint lock, took about a half a pint of buckshot for a charge, and was capable of destroying a whole band of robbers at once. In due time the flat, wide dome of the old Capitol, which resembled an inverted wash-bowl, was visible, and the stage was soon floundering through the broad expanse of mud or of dust known as Pennsylvania

Avenue, taking passengers to the doors of the hotels or boarding-houses which they had previously indicated.

When Congress first met at Washington there was but one hotel there and one in Georgetown. Others were, however, soon erected, and fifty-eight years ago there were half a dozen. The favorite establishment was the Indian Queen Hotel, which occupied the site of the




TO BALTIMORE BY STEAMBOAT.

present Metropolitan Hotel and was designated by a large swinging sign upon which figured Pocahontas, painted in glaring colors. The landlord, Jesse Brown, who used to come to the curbstone to "welcome the coming guests," was a native of Havre-de-Grace and had served his apprenticeship to tavern-keeping at Hagerstown and in Alexandria. A glance at the travelers as they alighted and were ushered by him into

the house would enable him mentally to assign each one to a room, the advantages of which he would describe ere sending its destined occupant there under the pilotage of a colored servant. When the next meal was ready the newly arrived guest was met at the door of the dining-room by Mr. Brown, wearing a large white apron, who escorted him to a seat and then went to the head of the table, where he carved and helped the principal dish. The excellences of this—fish or flesh or fowl—he would announce as he would invite those seated at the table to send up their plates for what he knew to be their favorite portions; and he would also invite attention to the dishes on other parts of the table, which were carved and helped by the guests who sat nearest them. "I have a delicious quarter of mutton from the Valley of Virginia," Mr. Brown would announce in a stentorian tone, which could be heard above the clatter of crockery and the din of steel knives and forks. "Let me send you a rare slice, Mr. A." "Colonel B., will you not have a bone?" "Mrs. C., send up your plate for a piece of the kidney." "Mrs. D., there is a fat and tender mongrel goose at the other end of the table." "Joe, pass around the sweet potatoes." "Colonel E., will you help to that chicken-pie before you?"

The expense of living at the Indian Queen was not great. The price of board was one dollar and seventy-five cents per day, ten dollars per week, or thirty-five dollars per month. Transient guests were charged fifty cents for breakfast, the same for supper, and seventy-five cents for dinner. Brandy and whisky were placed on the dinner-table in decanters, to be drunk by the guests without additional charge therefor. A bottle of real old Madeira imported into Alexandria

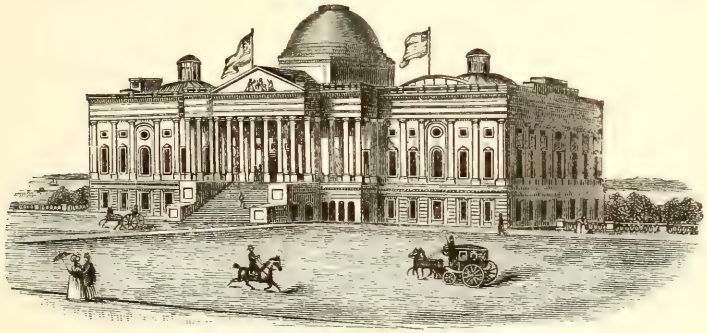
was supplied for three dollars; sherry, brandy, and gin were one dollar and a half per bottle, and Jamaica rum one dollar. At the bar toddies were made with unadulterated liquor and lump sugar, and the charge was twelve and a half cents a drink.

On the Fourth of July, the 22d of February, and other holidays, landlord Brown would concoct foaming egg-nogg in a mammoth punch-bowl once owned by Washington, and the guests of the house were all invited to partake. The tavern-desk was behind the bar, with rows of large bells hanging by circular springs on the wall, each with a bullet-shaped tongue, which continued to vibrate for some minutes after being pulled, thus showing to which room it belonged. The barkeeper prepared the "drinks" called for, saw that the bells were answered, received and delivered letters and cards, and answered questions by the score. He was supposed to know everybody in Washington, where they resided, and at what hour they could be seen.

The city of Washington had then been called by an observing foreigner "the city of magnificent distances," an appellation which was well merited. There was a group of small, shabby houses around the Navy Yard, another cluster on the river bank just above the Arsenal, which was to have been the business centre of the metropolis, and Pennsylvania Avenue, from the Capitol to Georgetown, with the streets immediately adjacent, was lined with tenements—many of them with shops on the ground floor. The Executive Departments were located in four brick edifices on the corners of the square, in the centre of which was the White House. The imposing building now occupied by the Department of the Interior had not been begun, nor had the General Post-Office replaced a large brick

structure intended for a hotel, but which the pecuniary necessities of the projector forced him to dispose of in a lottery before it was completed. The fortunate ticket was held by minors, whose guardian could neither sell the building nor finish it, and it remained for many years in a dilapidated condition.

The Capitol was pronounced completed in 1825. The two wings, which were the only portions of the building finished when the British occupied Washington, were burned, with their contents, including the Congressional Library and some works of art. When



EAST FRONT OF THE CAPITOL (1825).

Congress was convened in special session after the invasion, the two Houses assembled in the unfinished hotel previously mentioned, but soon occupied a brick building erected for their temporary use, which was afterward known as the Old Capitol Prison.

The tympanum of the eastern pediment of the Capitol was ornamented by a historical group which Mr. John Quincy Adams designed when Secretary of State. It was executed in marble by Luigi Persico, an Italian sculptor, whose work gave such satisfaction to Mr. Adams that he secured for him an order for the two colossal statues which now flank the central doorway.

War is represented by a stalwart gymnast with a profuse development of muscle and a benign expression of countenance, partially encased in ancient Roman armor, while Peace is a matronly dame, somewhat advanced in life and heavy in flesh, who carries an olive-branch as if she desired to use it to keep off flies.

The then recently completed *rotunda* of the Capitol—Mr. Gales took pains to have it called *rotundo* in the *National Intelligencer*—was a hall of elegant proportions, ninety-six feet in diameter and ninety-six feet in height to the apex of its semicircular dome. It had been decorated with remarkable historical bas-reliefs by Cappellano, Gevelot, and Causici, three Italian artists—two of them pupils of Canova. They undoubtedly possessed artistic ability and they doubtless desired to produce works of historical value. But they failed ignominiously. Their respective productions were thus interpreted by Grizzly Bear, a Menominee chief. Turning to the eastern doorway, over which there is represented the landing of the Pilgrims, he said: "There Ingen give hungry white man corn." Then turning to the northern doorway, over which is represented William Penn making a treaty with the Indians, he said: "There Ingen give white man land." Then turning to the western doorway, over which is represented Pocahontas saving the life of Captain Smith, he said: "There Ingen save white man's life." And then turning to the Southern doorway, over which is represented Daniel Boone, the pioneer, plunging his hunting-knife into the heart of a red man while his foot rests on the dead body of another, he said: "And there white man kill Ingen. Ugh!"

When Congress was in session, the rotunda presented a busy and motley scene every morning prior to

the convening of the two houses. It was a general rendezvous, and the newspaper correspondents were always in attendance to pick up the floating rumors of the day from their friendly men among the members of either house. Lobbyists also congregated there to combine or disperse forces and to button-hole their men. Every man with a bill on hand was early on the scene to catch a word with those likely to favor or oppose his schemes, and, if possible, to pick up some convert to his side. The nation's great men mingled there with the plebeians, and the rich and the poor met together in fulfillment of ancient prophecy. Sight-seers, too, from all parts of the country, were always numerous at this great centre.

The visit of General Lafayette to Washington gave a great impetus to Free-Masonry there. The corner-stone of a new Masonic Temple was laid, and many of the leading citizens had taken the degrees, when the rumored abduction of William Morgan was made the basis of a political and religious anti-Masonic crusade. It was asserted that Morgan, who had written and printed a book which professed to reveal the secrets of Free-Masonry, had been kidnapped, taken to Fort Niagara, and then plunged into the river, " with all his imperfections on his head."

Many well-informed persons, however, are decidedly of the opinion that Morgan was hired to go to Smyrna, where he lived some years, and then died; but his real or supposed assassination awakened a profound popular indignation. Some good men who belonged to the " mystic tie " felt it their duty to dissolve their connection with it, and the anti-Masonic party was at once got up by a goodly number of hopeful political aspirants. As General Jackson and Mr. Clay

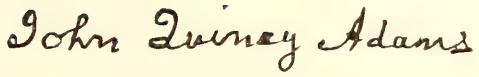
were both "Free and Accepted Masons," Mr. Adams had at first some hopes that he might secure his own re-election as the Anti-Masonic candidate.

A small theatre at Washington was occasionally opened by a company of actors from Philadelphia, who used to journey every winter as far south as Savannah, performing in the intermediate cities as they went and returned. The Jeffersons, the Warrens, and the Burkes belonged to this company, in which their children were trained for histrionic fame, and President Adams first saw the elder Booth when that tragedian accompanied one of these dramatic expeditions as its brightest star. On another occasion he saw Edwin Forrest, then unknown to fame, and enjoyed the finished acting of Cooper, as Charles Surface, in the "School for Scandal." The popular performance at that time was "Tom and Jerry, or Life in London," and the flash sayings of Corinthian Tom and Bob Logic were quoted even in Congressional debates.

The Friends, or Quakers, as "the world's people" call them, had a society at Washington formed principally by the clerks of that persuasion who had come from Philadelphia when the seat of government was removed from there. Their harmony was, however, disturbed in 1827, when a number of the most influential among them left the "Orthodox" or old belief and followed Elias Hicks, of New York, who founded what has since been known as Hicksite Friends. The Friends believed in a free gospel ministry, and did not recognize either water-baptism or the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. At their meetings the elders and preachers occupied a platform at one end of the meeting-houses, the men sitting on unpainted benches on one side and the women on the other. The con-

gregation would sit quietly, often for an hour, until the Spirit moved some preacher, male or female, to speak or to offer prayer. There was no singing, and often long intervals of silence. Marriages were solemnized at the monthly meetings, the ceremony consisting simply of a public acknowledgment by the man and woman, after due inquiry of their right to be united. After they had stood up in meeting and publicly taken one another to be man and wife, a certificate of the ceremony was publicly read by one of the elders, and then signed by the contracting parties and witnesses.

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JOHN QUINCY ADAMS—son of John Adams—was born at Braintree, Massachusetts, July 11th, 1767; Minister to the Netherlands and Prussia, 1794–1801; United States Senator, 1803–1808; Professor at Harvard College, 1808–1809; Minister to Russia, 1809–1817; negotiating the treaty of Ghent in 1815; Secretary of State, 1817–1825; President, 1825–1829; Representative in Congress, 1831, until stricken by death in the Capitol, February 23d, 1848.

## CHAPTER III.

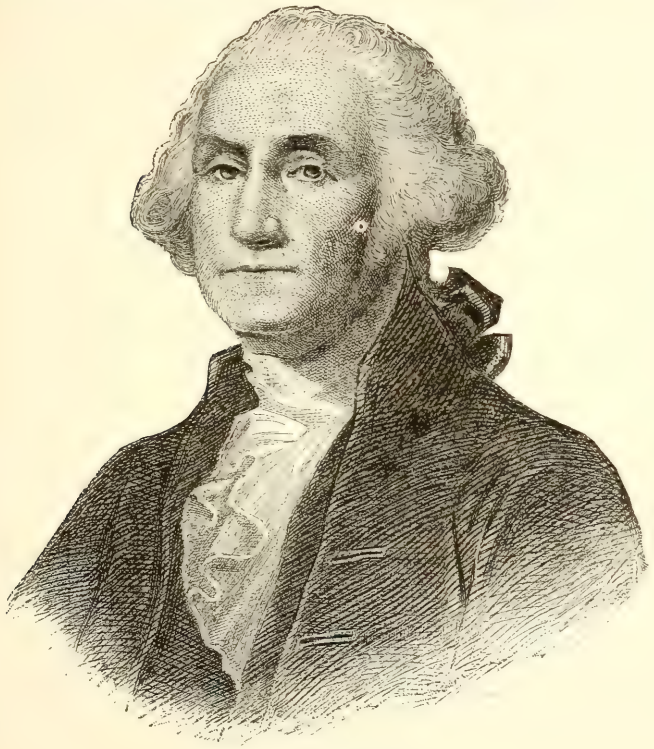
### JOURNALISM IN 1828.

OLD GEORGETOWN—THE UNION TAVERN—A NATAL AFRICAN SALUTE—PRESIDENT GEORGE WASHINGTON—MAJOR L'ENFANT—NEWSPAPER ORGANS—THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER—THE NATIONAL JOURNAL—MATTHEW L. DAVIS—JAMES GORDON BENNETT—MORDECAI M. NOAH—OTHER WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS—A NOTABLE BRITON—GAMBLING HOUSES—SENATORIAL CARD-PLAYING—SOCIAL GAMES OF WHIST.

GEORGETOWN, now called "West Washington," was originally laid out as a town in 1751, and settled by the Scotch agents of English mercantile houses, whose vessels came annually to its wharves. They brought valuable freights of hardware, dry goods, and wines, and they carried back tobacco, raised in the surrounding country, and furs, brought down the Potomac by Indian traders. There were also lines of brigs and schooners running to New York, Boston, Salem, Newburyport, and the West Indies. Two principal articles of import were sugar and molasses, which were sold at auction on the wharves. Business in these staples has been entirely superseded by the coal and flour trade.

The main street of Georgetown was generally filled every week-day with the lumbering Conestoga six-horse wagons, in which the farmers of Maryland and Central Pennsylvania brought loads of wheat and of corn, taking back dry goods, groceries, salt, and, during the fishing season, fresh shad and herring. Another source

of trade was the Potomac River, which was navigable above Georgetown as far as Cumberland in long, flat-bottomed boats, sharp at both ends, called "gondolas." These boats were poled down the Potomac to the Great Falls, twelve miles above Georgetown, where a canal



GEORGE WASHINGTON.

with locks was constructed, running around the falls and back to the river. The same plan of avoiding the rapids was suggested by George Washington, who was once president of the company. The canal was finished in 1793, but it never yielded a sufficient revenue to pay expenses.

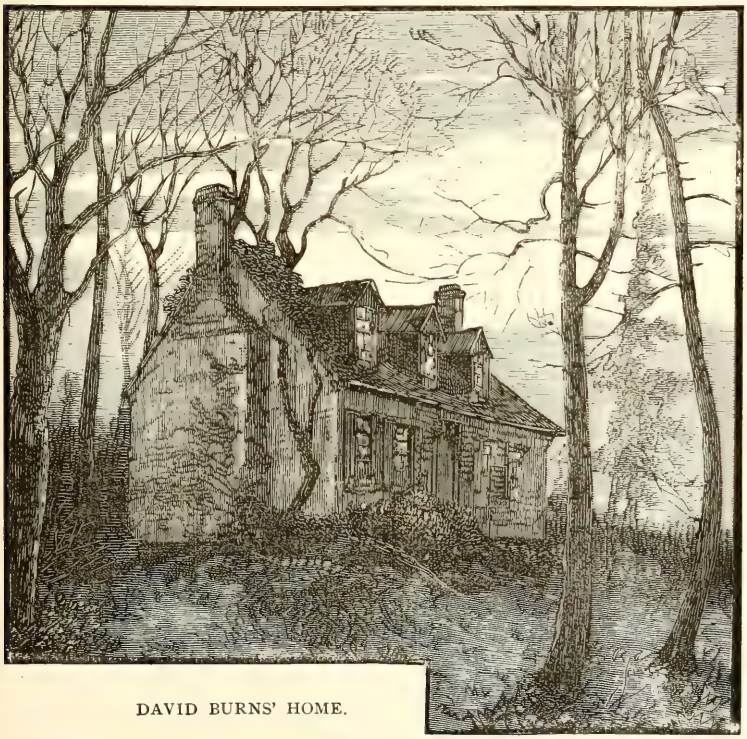
The "gondolas" brought down considerable quantities of flour, corn, pork, and iron, much of which was shipped at Georgetown to other ports. During the year 1812 several hundred hogsheads of Louisiana sugar were brought by the way of the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Potomac Rivers to Georgetown. This was a realization of Washington's idea that the city which he founded and which bore his name would become an *entrepot* for the products of the Mississippi Valley destined for shipment abroad. He displayed his faith in this belief by the purchase of wharf lots, which would not to-day bring what he paid for them.

The Union Tavern at Georgetown was a well-patronized and fashionable inn during the first quarter of the present century. Among the distinguished men who were its guests were Louis Philippe, Count Volney, Baron Humboldt, Fulton (the inventor), Talleyrand, Jerome Bonaparte, Washington Irving, General St. Clair, Lorenzo Dow (the eccentric preacher), Francis S. Key (author of the "Star Spangled Banner"), with John Randolph and scores of other Congressmen, who used to ride to and from the Capitol in a large stage-coach with seats on the top and called the "Royal George."

When my mother was born at Georgetown, in 1799, the neighbors were startled by the repeated firing of a heavily charged musket beneath the window of her mother's room. It was a welcome-into-the-world salute fired by "Old Yarrah," a very aged Mahometan, who had been brought as a slave from Guinea to Georgetown, where my grandfather had shown him some kindness, which he thus acknowledged after the custom of his own people.

General Washington used to pass through George-

town on his journeys between the North and Mount Vernon, and I have heard my grandfather describe the interest which he took when the "Federal City" was located. On one occasion he rode over to visit David Burns, who owned a farm on which the Executive Mansion and the Departments now stand. Washing-



DAVID BURNS' HOME.

ton agreed with the Commissioners that what is now Lafayette Square should be a reservation, but Burns disliked to donate any more building lots for the public good. Finally Washington lost his temper and left, saying, as he crossed the porch: "Had not the Federal City been laid out here, you would have died a poor

tobacco planter." "Aye, mon!" retorted Burns, in broad Scotch, "an' had ye nae married the widow Custis, wi' a' her nagurs, you would hae been a land surveyor to-day, an' a mighty poor ane at that." Ultimately, however, the obstinate old fellow donated the desired square of ground.

When Major L'Enfant came to Georgetown to lay out the Federal District he brought a letter of introduction to my grandfather, who had a great deal of trouble in endeavoring to adjust the difficulties between the fiery French officer and the Commissioners appointed to govern the infant metropolis. The Major, who was very imperious, claimed supreme authority, which the Commissioners would not submit to. On one occasion a Mr. Carroll had commenced the erection of a large brick house, which Major L'Enfant found encroached on one of the proposed streets. Summoning his chain bearers and axmen, he demolished the trespassing structure and filled up the cellar, against Mr. Carroll's earnest protests.

He was a favorite with Washington, but Jefferson disliked him on account of his connection with the Society of the Cincinnati, and availed himself of his difficulty with the Commissioners to discharge him.

The Major then became an unsuccessful petitioner before Congress for a redress of his real and fancied wrongs, and he was to be seen almost every day slowly pacing the rotunda of the Capitol. He was a tall, thin man, who wore, toward the close of his life, a blue military surtout coat, buttoned quite to the throat, with a tall, black stock, but no visible signs of linen. His hair was plastered with pomatum close to his head, and he wore a napless high beaver bell-crowned hat. Under his arm he generally carried a roll of papers rela-

ting to his claim upon the Government, and in his right hand he swung a formidable hickory cane with a large silver head. A strict Roman Catholic, he received a home in the family of Mr. Digges, near Washington, in whose garden his remains were interred when he died.

Newspaper "organs" formed an important feature of the early political machinery at Washington. Railroads, as well as the magnetic telegraph, were then unknown, and it took two days or more for the transmission of intelligence between the Federal Metropolis and New York, while it was a week or two in reaching Portland, St. Louis, New Orleans, or Savannah. This made it advisable for each successive Administration to have a newspaper published at Washington which would reliably inform the subordinate officials what was being done and keep alive a sympathy between them and the President.



JOSEPH GALES.

The *National Intelligencer* was never devoted to Mr. Adams, as its proprietor had a kind regard for Mr. Clay, but it was always hostile to the election of General Jackson. Mr. Joseph Gales, its editor, wrote ponderous leaders on the political questions of the day, and occasionally reported, in short-hand, the speeches

of Congressional magnates. His partner, Colonel William Winstead Seaton, was by trade a printer, and his generous hand was ever ready to aid those of his fellow-craftsmen who were in destitute circumstances—indeed, the superannuated compositors of the *National Intelligencer* always received "half pay." Coming here when Washington was only just "staked out," he was honorably identified with the growth of Washington City, and his administration as Mayor is favorably spoken of by the citizens of all classes and parties.



COLONEL W. W. SEATON.

The *National Journal* had been established as a Calhoun organ, with John Agg, an Englishman of great ability, as its editor, and Richard Houghton, afterward the popular editor of the Boston *Atlas*, as its Congressional reporter. In 1825 the paper was purchased by Peter Force and became the "hand-organ" of all the elements of opposition to General Jackson. Such abusive articles and scurrilous remarks as the dignified *National Intelligencer* would not publish appeared in the *National Journal.* Some of these articles reflected upon Mrs. Jackson and gave great offense to her husband, who was persuaded that they were inspired by President Adams.

Matthew L. Davis, who was probably the most influ-

ential of Washington correspondents, was a New York printer. He had entered political life in 1790 and joined the Democratic party, which came into power by the election of Jefferson as President and Burr as Vice-President. Davis went to Washington shortly afterward, and was boasting that the elevation of Mr. Jefferson was brought about solely by the management of Tammany Hall. Mr. Jefferson was a philosopher, and soon after caught a very large fly, calling the attention of Mr. Davis to the remarkable fact of the great disproportion in size of one portion of the insect to its body. Mr. Davis took the hint, and left the President, in doubt as to whether Mr. Jefferson intended the comparison to apply to New York or to him (Davis) as an individual.

Mr. Davis was at one time wealthy, having cleared over one hundred thousand dollars in the South American trade; but he became poor, and for many years he was the correspondent at Washington of the *Courier and Enquirer*, of New York, under the signature of "The Spy in Washington." He was also the correspondent of the London *Times*, under the signature of "The Genevese Traveler." On one occasion Mr. Davis was presented to the British Minister at Washington (Lord Ashburton) as the author of those letters in the *Times*. "I am delighted to see you," said the Envoy. "They are extraordinary letters. I have read them with great pleasure. I hope, sir, that you are well paid by the *Times*. If not, sir, let me know it; I will take care that you are paid handsomely." Mr. Davis begged not to be misunderstood, and said that he was amply paid by the *Times*. He received two guineas for each letter.

James Gordon Bennett in 1828, when in his thirtieth

year, became the Washington correspondent of the New York *Enquirer*, which was then on the topmost round of the journalistic ladder. It is related of him that during his stay in this position he came across a copy of *Walpole's Letters* and resolved to try the effect of a few letters written in a similar strain. The truth of this is doubtful. It is more probable that the natural talents of the man were now unfettered, and he wrote without fear of censorship and with all the ease which a sense of freedom inspires. He was naturally witty, sarcastic, and sensible. These letters were lively, they abounded in personal allusions, and they described freely, not only Senators, but the wives and daughters of Senators, and they established Mr. Bennett's reputation as a light lance among the hosts of writers.

The *Enquirer* and the *Courier* were soon after combined, and Mr. Bennett continued to write in the editorial department of the united journal, and in the same year became its associate editor. In 1831 he cooperated zealously with General Jackson and the Democrats in opposing the rechartering of the United States Bank. Mr. Bennett made his first personal venture as a newspaper publisher in the New York *Globe*, which was issued just one month, advocating the cause of Jackson and Van Buren. For a time Mr. Bennett then was interested in a Philadelphia paper, the *Pennsylvanian*, after which came his monumental life work, the New York *Herald*.

Major M. M. Noah was for many years a leading New York journalist, who occasionally visited Washington, where he was always welcome. Major Noah was born in Philadelphia, where he was apprenticed, as he grew up, to learn the carver's trade, but he soon abandoned it for political pursuits. Receiving the ap-

pointment of Consul to Tunis, he passed several years in Northern Africa, and on his return wrote a very clever book containing his souvenirs of travel. About the year 1825 he conceived the idea of collecting the scattered Jews and of rebuilding Jerusalem. Grand Island, in the Niagara River, above Niagara Falls, was designated as the rendezvous, and Major Noah's proclamation, which he sent to all parts of the world, created quite a sensation among the Children of Israel. He subsequently was connected with the evening press of New York and was then appointed to a Government office by President Jackson. He was a man of fine personal appearance and great conversational powers.

Another New York journalist, just coming before the public, was Thurlow Weed, a tall man, with an altogether massive person. His large head was at that time covered with dark hair, and he had prominent features and gray eyes, which were watchful and overhung by shaggy eyebrows. He was a man of great natural strength of character, deep penetration as regards human nature, and a good sense, judgment, and cheerfulness in his own characteristics which conduced to respect and popularity. He was most happy in his intercourse with men, for he had, when a mere youth, a geniality and tact which drew all toward him, and it has been said that he never forgot a face or a fact. There has never been a better example of the good old stock of printer-editors, who seemed to have an intuitive capacity for public affairs, and never to love political success well enough to leave their newspapers in order to pursue the glittering attraction of public life.

Among the other newspaper men in Washington were William Hayden, Congressional reporter for the

*National Intelligencer*, who afterward succeeded Mr. Houghton as editor of the Boston *Atlas;* Lund Washington, equally famed as a performer on the violin and a writer of short-hand; Samuel L. Knapp, a graduate of Dartmouth College, who abandoned the law for journalism and corresponded with the Boston *Gazette*, and James Brooks, a graduate of Waterville, afterward the founder of the New York *Express* and a Representative in Congress, who was the correspondent of the Portland *Advertiser* and other papers.

Prominent as an adopted citizen of Washington and as a personal friend of President Adams was Dr. William F. Thornton, Superintendent of the Patent Office, who had by personal appeals to his conquering countrymen, in 1814, saved the models of patents from the general conflagration of the public buildings. He was also a devoted lover of horse-racing, and on one occasion, when he expected that a horse of his would win the cup, Mr. Adams walked out to the race-course to enjoy the Doctor's triumph, but witnessed his defeat. After the death of Dr. Thornton and of his accomplished wife, it became known that she was the daughter of the unfortunate Dr. Dodd, of London, who was executed for forgery in 1777. Her mother emigrated to Philadelphia soon afterward, under the name of Brodeau, and brought her infant daughter with her. In Philadelphia she opened a boarding-school, which was liberally patronized, as she had brought excellent letters of recommendation and displayed great ability as a teacher. The daughter grew up to be a lady remarkable for her beauty and accomplishments and married Dr. Thornton, who brought her to Washington in 1800.

Congress had placed on the statute-book stringent

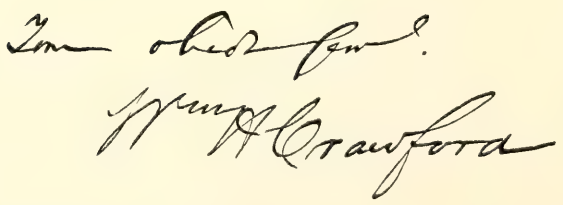
penal laws against gambling, but they were a dead letter, unless some poor dupe made a complaint of foul play, or some fleeced blackleg sought vengeance through the aid of the Grand Jury; then the matter was usually compounded by the repayment of the money. The northern sidewalk of Pennsylvania Avenue, between the Indian Queen Hotel and the Capitol gate, was lined with faro banks, where good suppers were served and well-supplied sideboards were free to all comers. It was a tradition that in one of these rooms Senator Montford Stokes, of North Carolina, sat down one Thursday afternoon to play a game of brag with Montjoy Bailey, then the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate. That body had adjourned over, as was then its custom, from Thursday until Monday, so the players were at liberty to keep on with their game, only stopping occasionally for refreshments. The game was continued Friday night and Saturday, through Saturday night and all day Sunday and Sunday night, the players resting for a snatch of sleep as nature became exhausted. Monday morning the game was in full blast, but at ten o'clock Bailey moved an adjournment, alleging that his official duties required his presence in the Senate Chamber. Stokes remonstrated, but the Sergeant-at-Arms persisted, and rose from the table, the Senator grumbling and declaring that had he supposed that Stokes would have thus prematurely broken up the game he would not have sat down to play with him.

Whist was regularly played at many of the "Congressional messes," and at private parties a room was always devoted to whist-playing. Once when the wife of Henry Clay was chaperoning a young lady from Boston, at a party given by one of his associates in the Cabinet, they passed through the card-room, where

Mr. Clay and other gentlemen were playing whist. The young lady, in her Puritan simplicity, inquired: "Is card-playing a common practice here?" "Yes," replied Mrs. Clay, "the gentlemen always play when they get together." "Don't it distress you," said the Boston maiden, "to have Mr. Clay gamble?" "Oh! dear, no!" composedly replied the statesman's wife, "he 'most always wins."

There were only a few billiard-rooms, mostly patronized by the members of the foreign legations or visiting young men from the Northern cities. Ten-pin alleys were abundant, and some of the muscular Congressmen from the frontier would make a succession of "ten strikes" with great ease, using the heaviest balls. Some of the English residents organized a cricket club, and used to play on a level spot in "the slashes," near where the British Legation was afterward built, but the game was not popular, and no American offered to join the club.

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William Harris Crawford was born in Virginia, February 24th, 1772; was United States Senator, 1807–1813; Minister to France, 1813–1815; Secretary of War, 1815–1816; Secretary of the Treasury, 1816–1825; Judge of the Northern Circuit Court of Georgia, 1827, until he died at Elberton, Georgia, September 15th, 1834.

## CHAPTER IV.

### PROMINENT SENATORS OF 1827.

THE NINETEENTH CONGRESS—VICE-PRESIDENT JOHN C. CALHOUN—MARTIN VAN BUREN—NATHANIEL MACON, OF NORTH CAROLINA—THOMAS HART BENTON—RANDOLPH, OF ROANOKE—DUEL BETWEEN CLAY AND RANDOLPH—AN OFFENDED VIRGINIAN—A FUTURE PRESIDENT—PROMINENT SENATORS—SENATORIAL CONTROL OF SOCIETY—THE DANCING ASSEMBLIES—FASHIONABLE ATTIRE—BELLES OF THE PERIOD—THE CODE OF HONOR.

THE old Senate Chamber, now used by the Supreme Court, was admirably adapted for the deliberations of the forty-eight gentlemen who composed the upper house of the Nineteenth Congress. Modeled after the theatres of ancient Greece, it possessed excellent acoustic properties, and there was ample accommodation in the galleries for the few strangers who then visited Washington. The Senate used to meet at noon and generally conclude its day's work by three o'clock, while adjournments over from Thursday until the following Monday were frequent.

John C. Calhoun was Vice-President of the United States, and consequently President of the Senate—a position which to him was very irksome, as he was forced to sit and dumbly listen to debates in which he was eager to participate. He had been talked of by some of the best men in the country as a candidate during the then recent Presidential election, but the North had not given him any substantial support. Re-

garding each Senator as an Ambassador from a sovereign State, he did not believe that as Vice-President he possessed the power to call them to order for words spoken in debate. Senator John Randolph abused this license, and one day commenced one of his tirades by saying: "*Mr. Speaker! I mean Mr. President of the Senate and would-be President of the United States, which God in His infinite mercy avert,*" and then went on in his usual strain of calumny and abuse.

Mr. Calhoun was tall, well-formed, without an ounce of superfluous flesh, with a serious expression of countenance rarely brightened by a smile, and with his long, black hair thrown back from his forehead, he looked like an arch-conspirator waiting for the time to come when he could strike the first blow. In his dress he affected a Spartan simplicity, yet he used to have four horses harnessed to his carriage, and his entertainments at his residence on Georgetown Heights were very elegant. His private life was irreproachable, although, when Secretary of War under Mr. Monroe, he had suffered obloquy because of a profitable contract, which had been dishonestly awarded during his absence by his chief clerk to that official's brother-in-law.

The prime mover of the Senate of that day was Martin Van Buren, of New York, who was beginning to reap the reward of years of subservient intrigues. Making the friends of Calhoun and of Crawford believe that they had each been badly treated by the alliance between Adams and Clay, he united them in the support of General Jackson, and yet no one suspected him. When Mr. Van Buren had first been elected to Congress, Rufus King, of his State, had said to G. F. Mercer, also a member, "Within two weeks Van Buren will become perfectly acquainted with the

views and feelings of every member, yet no man will know his."

This prediction was verified, and Mr. Van Buren soon became the directing spirit among the friends of General Jackson, although no one was ever able to quote his views. Taking Aaron Burr as his political model, but leading an irreproachable private life, he rose by his ability to plan and to execute with consummate skill the most difficult political intrigues. He was rather under the medium height, with a high forehead, a quick eye, and pleasing features. He made attitude and deportment a study, and when, on his leaving the Senate, his household furniture was sold at auction it was noticed that the carpet before a large looking-glass in his study was worn threadbare. It was there that he had rehearsed his speeches.

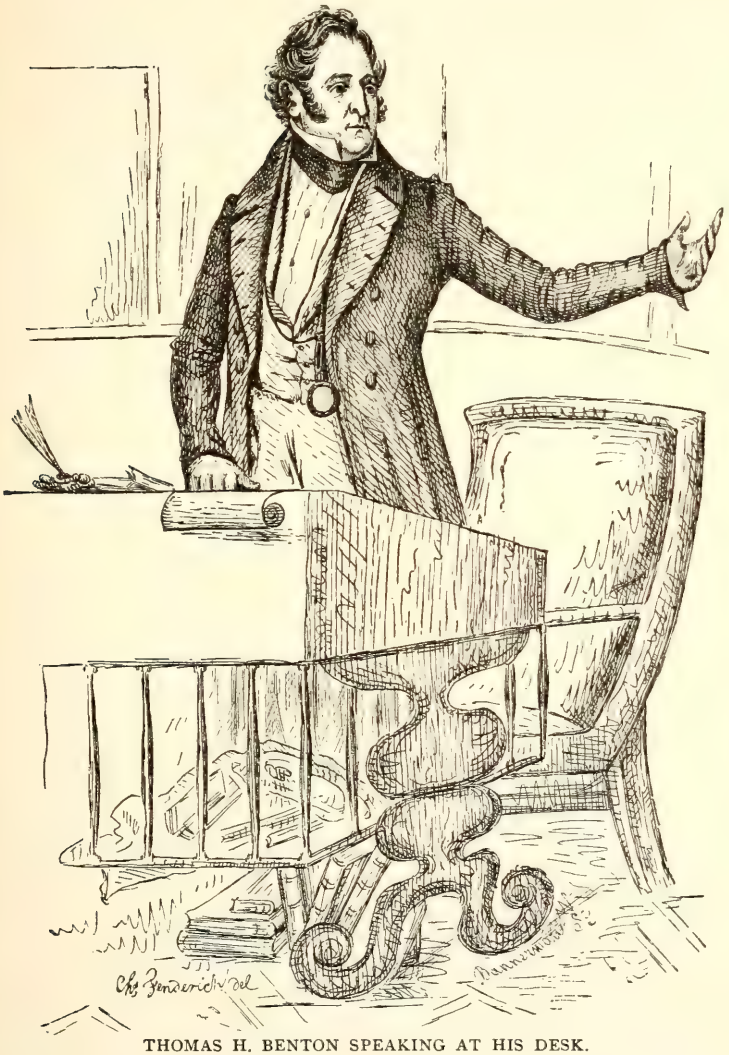


JOHN H. EATON.

The "Father of the Senate" was Nathaniel Macon, of North Carolina, who had served in the ranks during the Revolution, and then in the Senate of North Carolina. He was elected to the Second Congress, taking his seat in October, 1791, and after having been re-elected eleven times, generally without opposition, he

was transferred to the Senate in 1815, and re-elected until he declined in 1828, making thirty-seven years of continuous Congressional service. At the very commencement of his Congressional career he energetically opposed the financial schemes of Alexander Hamilton, then Secretary of the Treasury, and throughout his political career he was a "strict, severe, and stringent" Democrat. Personally Mr. Macon was a genial companion. He had none of that moroseness at the fireside which often accompanies political distinction, and it was said that at his home he was the kindest and most beloved of slave-masters.

Colonel Thomas Hart Benton, who had earned his military title in the army during the war with Great Britain, was a large, heavily framed man, with black, curly hair and whiskers, prominent features, and a stentorian voice. He wore the high, black-silk neck-stock and the double-breasted frock-coat of his youthful times during his thirty years' career in the Senate, varying with the seasons the materials of which his pantaloons were made, but never the fashion in which they were cut. When in debate, outraging every customary propriety of language, he would rush forward with blind fury upon every obstacle, like the huge, wild buffaloes then ranging the prairies of his adopted State, whose paths, he used to subsequently assert, would show the way through the passes of the Rocky Mountains. He was not a popular speaker, and when he took the floor occupants of the galleries invariably began to leave, while many Senators devoted themselves to their correspondence. In private life Colonel Benton was gentleness and domestic affection personified, and a desire to have his children profit by the superior advantages for their education in the District of Columbia kept

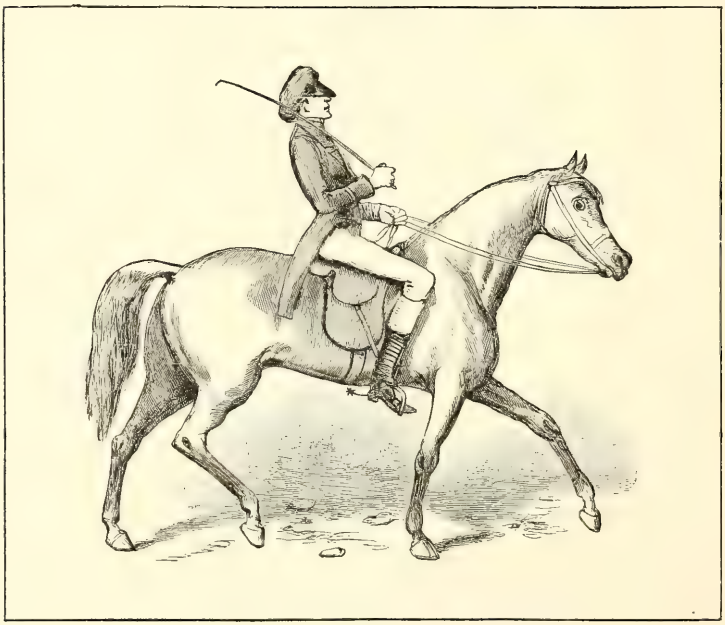


THOMAS H. BENTON SPEAKING AT HIS DESK.

him from his constituents in Missouri, where a new generation of voters grew up who did not know him and who would not follow his political lead,

while he was ignorant of their views on the question of slavery.

Senator Randolph, of Virginia, attracted the most attention on the part of strangers. He was at least six feet in height, with long limbs, an ill-proportioned body, and a small, round head. Claiming descent from Pocahontas, he wore his coarse, black hair long, parted



JOHN RANDOLPH RIDING TO THE CAPITOL.

in the middle, and combed down on either side of his sallow face. His small, black eyes were expressive in their rapid glances, especially when he was engaged in debate, and his high-toned and thin voice would ring through the Senate Chamber like the shrill scream of an angry vixen. He generally wore a full suit of heavy, drab-colored English broadcloth, the high, rolling collar

of his surtout coat almost concealing his head, while the skirts hung in voluminous folds about his knee-breeches and the white leather tops of his boots. He used to enter the Senate Chamber wearing a pair of silver spurs, carrying a heavy riding-whip, and followed by a favorite hound, which crouched beneath his desk. He wrote, and occasionally spoke, in riding-gloves, and it was his favorite gesture to point the long index finger of his right hand at his opponent as he hurled forth tropes and figures of speech at him. Every ten or fifteen minutes, while he occupied the floor, he would exclaim in a low tone, "Tims, more porter!" and the assistant doorkeeper would hand him a foaming tumbler of potent malt liquor, which he would hurriedly drink, and then proceed with his remarks, often thus drinking three or four quarts in an afternoon. He was not choice in his selection of epithets, and as Mr. Calhoun took the ground that he did not have the power to call a Senator to order, the irate Virginian pronounced President Adams "a traitor," Daniel Webster "a vile slanderer," John Holmes "a dangerous fool," and Edward Livingston "the most contemptible and degraded of beings, whom no man ought to touch, unless with a pair of tongs." One day, while he was speaking with great freedom of abuse of Mr. Webster, then a member of the House, a Senator informed him in an undertone that Mrs. Webster was in the gallery. He had not the delicacy to desist, however, until he had fully emptied the vials of his wrath. Then he set upon Mr. Speaker Taylor, and after abusing him soundly he turned sarcastically to the gentleman who had informed him of Mrs. Webster's presence, and asked, "Is Mrs. Taylor present also?"

Henry Clay was frequently the object of Mr. Ran-

dolph's denunciations, which he bore patiently until the "Lord of Roanoke" spoke, one day, of the reported alliance between the President and the Secretary of State as the "coalition of Blifil and Black George—the combination, unheard of till then, of the Puritan and the blackleg." Mr. Clay at once wrote to know whether he intended to call him a political gambler, or to attach the infamy of such epithets to his private life. Mr. Randolph declined to give any explanation, and a duel was fought without bloodshed.

Mr. Randolph, on another occasion, deliberately insulted Mr. James Lloyd, one of "the solid men of Boston," then a Senator from Massachusetts, who had, in accordance with the custom, introduced upon the floor of the Senate one of his constituents, Major Benjamin Russell, the editor of the *Columbian Sentinel*. The sight of a Federal editor aroused Mr. Randolph's anger, and he at once insolently demanded that the floor of the Senate be cleared, forcing Major Russell to retire. Mr. Lloyd took the first opportunity to express his opinion of this gratuitous insult, and declared, in very forcible language, that, as he had introduced Major Russell on the floor, he was responsible therefor. Mr. Randolph indulged in a little gasconade, in which he announced that his carriage was waiting at the door to convey him to Baltimore, and at the conclusion of his remarks he left the Senate Chamber and the city. Mr. Calhoun, who had not attempted to check Mr. Randolph, lamented from the chair that anything should have happened to mar the harmony of the Senate, and again declared that he had no power to call a Senator to order, nor would he for ten thousand worlds look like a usurper.

Senator Tazewell, Mr. Randolph's colleague, was a

first-class Virginia abstractionist and an avowed hater of New England. Dining one day at the White House, he provoked the President by offensively asserting that he had "never known a Unitarian who did not believe in the sea-serpent." Soon afterward Mr. Tazewell spoke of the different kinds of wines, and declared that Tokay and Rhenish wine were alike in taste. "Sir," said Mr. Adams, "I do not believe that you ever drank a drop of Tokay in all your life." For this remark the President subsequently sent an apology to Mr. Tazewell, but the Virginia Senator never forgot or forgave the remark.

William Henry Harrison, a tall, spare, gray-haired gentleman, who had gone from his Virginia home into the Western wilderness as aid-de-camp to General Anthony Wayne, had been elected a Senator from the State of Ohio, but probably never dreamed that in years to come he would be elected President by an immense majority, with John Tyler on the ticket as Vice-President. Colonel Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, had, however, begun to electioneer for the Democratic nomination for the Vice-Presidency, basing his claim upon his having shot Tecumseh at the battle of the Thames, and he was finally successful. He was of medium size, with large features, and light auburn hair, and his private life was attacked without mercy by his political opponents.

John Henry Eaton, of Tennessee, was General Jackson's henchman, who had come to the Senate that he might the better electioneer for his old friend and commander. William Hendricks, a Senator from Indiana, was the uncle of Thomas A. Hendricks, of a subsequent political generation. The New Hampshire Senators were Levi Woodbury and John Bell, men of de-

cided ability and moral worth. Georgia supplied a polished and effective orator in J. McPherson Berrien. Vermont was represented by portly and good-looking Dudley Chase, who was the uncle of Chief Justice Chase, and by Horatio Seymour, of Middlebury. Maine's stalwart, blue-eyed Senator, Albion Keith Parris, was said to have filled more public offices than any other man of his age, and his colleague, John Holmes, although rude in speech and at times vulgar, was the humorous champion of the North. Ever on the watch for some unguarded expression by a Southern Senator, no sooner would one be uttered than he would pounce upon it and place the speaker in a most uncomfortable position. John Tyler one day thought that he could annoy Mr. Holmes, and asked him what had become of that political firm once mentioned in debate by John Randolph as "James Madison, Felix Grundy, John Holmes, and the Devil." Mr. Holmes rose at once. "I will tell the gentleman," said he, "what has become of that firm. The first member is dead, the second has gone into retirement, the third now addresses you, and the last has gone over to the Nullifiers, and is now electioneering among the gentleman's constituents. So the partnership is legally dissolved."

The Senators were rather exclusive, those from the South assuming the control of "good society," which was then very limited in its extent and simple in its habits. Few Senators or Representatives brought their wives to cheer their Congressional labors, and a parlor of ordinary size would contain all of those who were accustomed to attend social gatherings. The diplomats, with the officers of the army and navy stationed at headquarters, were accompanied by their wives, and there were generally a few visitors of social distinction.

The Washington assemblies were very ceremonious and exclusive. Admission was obtained only by cards of invitation, issued after long consultations among the Committeemen, and, once inside the exclusive ring, the beaux and belles bowed beneath the disciplinary rule of



DANCING PARTY OF THE ANCIENT ELITE.

a master of ceremonies. No gentleman, whatever may have been his rank or calling, was permitted on the floor unless in full evening dress, with the adornment of pumps, silk stockings, and flowing cravat, unless he belonged to the army or the navy, in which case complete regimentals covered a multitude of sins. The

ball, commencing upon the stroke of eight precisely, opened with a rollicking country dance, and the lady selected for the honor of opening the festivities was subsequently toasted as the reigning divinity of fashion for the hour. The "*minuet de la cour*" and stately "quadrille," varied by the "basket dance," and, on exceptional occasions, the exhilarating "cheat," formed the staple for saltatorial performance, until the hour of eleven brought the concluding country dance, when a final squad of roysterers bobbed "up the middle and down again" to the airs of "Sir Roger de Coverly" or "Money Musk."

The music was furnished by colored performers on the violin, except on great occasions, when some of the Marine Band played an accompaniment on flutes and clarinets. The refreshments were iced lemonade, ice-cream, port wine negus, and small cakes, served in a room adjoining the dancing-hall, or brought in by the colored domestics, or by the cavalier in his own proper person, who ofttimes appeared upon the dancing-floor, elbowing his way to the lady of his adoration, in the one hand bearing well-filled glasses, and in the other sustaining a plate heaped up with cake.

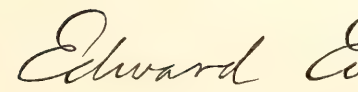
The costume of the ladies was classic in its scantiness, especially at balls and parties. The fashionable ball dress was of white India crape, and five breadths, each a quarter of a yard wide, were all that was asked for to make a skirt, which only came down to the ankles, and was elaborately trimmed with a dozen or more rows of narrow flounces. Silk or cotton stockings were adorned with embroidered "clocks," and thin slippers were ornamented with silk rosettes and tiny buckles.

Those gentlemen who dressed fashionably wore

"Bolivar" frock-coats of some gay-colored cloth, blue or green or claret, with large lapels and gilded buttons. Their linen was ruffled; their "Cossack" trousers were voluminous in size, and were tucked into high "Hessian" boots with gold tassels. They wore two and sometimes three waistcoats, each of different colors, and from their watch-pockets dangled a ribbon, with a bunch of large seals. When in full dress, gentlemen wore dress-coats with enormous collars and short waists, well-stuffed white cambric cravats, small-clothes, or tight-fitting pantaloons, silk stockings, and pumps.

Duels were very common, and a case of dueling pistols was a part of the outfit of the Southern and Western Congressmen, who used to spend more or less time in practicing. Imported pistols were highly prized, but the best weapons were made by a noted Philadelphia gunsmith named Derringer, who gave his name to a short pistol of his invention to be carried in the trouser's pocket for use in street fights. Some of the dueling pistols were inlaid with gold, and they all had flint-locks, as percussion caps had not been invented, nor hair triggers.

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EDWARD EVERETT. Born in Massachusetts April 11th, 1794; was a Unitarian clergyman, and a professor at Harvard College, until elected a Representative from Massachusetts, 1825–1835; Governor of Massachusetts, 1836–1840; Minister to Great Britain, 1841–1845; President of Harvard College, 1846–1849; Secretary of State under President Fillmore, 1852–1853; United States Senator from Massachusetts, 1853–1854; died at Boston, January 15th, 1865.

## CHAPTER V.

### PROMINENT REPRESENTATIVES OF 1827.

THE REPRESENTATIVES' HALL—ADMISSION OF LADIES—WEBSTER, OF MASSACHUSETTS—EDWARD EVERETT—M'DUFFIE, OF SOUTH CAROLINA—RHODE ISLAND'S BALD EAGLE—A BARGAIN EXPOSED—RETRENCHMENT AND REFORM—PROMINENT REPRESENTATIVES—THE SUPREME COURT—CHIEF JUSTICE MARSHALL—MR. JUSTICE WASHINGTON—CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

THE Hall of the House of Representatives (now used as a National Gallery of Statuary) was a reproduction of the ancient theatre, magnificent in its effect, but so deficient in acoustic properties that it was unfit for legislative occupation. It was there that Henry Clay, then Speaker of the House, had welcomed General Lafayette as "the Nation's Guest." The contrast between the tall and graceful Kentuckian, with his sunny smile and his silver-toned voice, and the good old Marquis, with his auburn wig awry, must have been great. His reply appeared to come from a grateful heart, but it was asserted that the Speaker had written both his own words of welcome and also Lafayette's acknowledgment of them, and it became a subject of newspaper controversy, which was ended by the publication of a card signed "H. Clay," in which he positively denied the authorship, although he admitted that he had suggested the most effective sentences.

Ladies had been excluded from the galleries of the House originally, in accordance with British precedent. But one night at a party a lady expressed her regret to Hon. Fisher Ames, of Massachusetts, that she could



LAFAYETTE, THE NATION'S GUEST.

not hear the arguments, especially his speeches. Mr. Ames gallantly replied that he knew of no reason why ladies should not to hear the debates. "Then," said Mrs. Langdon, "if you will let me know when next you intend to speak, I will make up a party of ladies

and we will go and hear you." The notice was given, the ladies went, and since then Congressional orators have always had fair hearers—with others perhaps not very fair.

The House was really occupied, during the administration of John Quincy Adams, in the selection of his successor. At first the political outlook was rather muddled, although keen eyes averred that they could perceive, moving restlessly to and fro, the indefinite forms of those shadows which coming events project. Different seers interpreted the phantasmal appearances in different fashions, and either endeavored to form novel combinations, or joined in raking common sewers for filth wherewith to bespatter those who were the rivals of their favorite candidates. It was then that Congressional investigating committees became a part of the political machinery of the day. The accounts of President Adams when, in former years, he was serving the country in Europe as a diplomatist; the summary execution of deserters by order of General Jackson, when he commanded the army in Florida; the bills for refurnishing the White House; the affidavits concerning the alleged bargain between the President and his Secretary of State, and the marriage of General Jackson to Mrs. Robards before she had been divorced from Mr. Robards, were, with many other scandals, paraded before the public.

Daniel Webster had been recognized in advance as the leader of the House by his appointment as chairman of the committee to inform Mr. Adams that he had been elected President. This Mr. Webster did verbally, but Mr. Adams had prepared a written reply, which had been copied by a clerk and bore his autograph signature.

Mr. Webster was at that period of his life the embodiment of health and good spirits. His stalwart frame, his massive head, crowned with a wealth of black hair, his heavy eye-brows, overhanging his great, expressive, and cavernous eyes, all distinguished him as one of the powers of the realm of intellect—one of the few to whom Divinity has accorded a royal share of the Promethian fire of genius. His deportment was ceremonious, and he made a decided impression on strangers. When Jenny Lind first saw him, she was much impressed by his majestic appearance, and afterward exclaimed, "I have seen a man!"

His swarthy complexion gained him the epithet of "Black Dan." He was very proud of his complexion, which he inherited from his grandmother, Susannah Bachelder (from whom the poet Whittier also claimed descent), and he used to quote the compliment paid by General Stark, the hero of Bennington, to his father, Colonel Ebenezer Webster: "He has the black Bachelder complexion, which burnt gunpowder will not change." Although majestic in appearance, Mr. Webster was not really a very large man; in height he was only about five feet ten inches. His head looked very large, but he wore a seven and five-eighth hat, as did Mr. Clay, whose head appeared much smaller. His shoulders were very broad and his chest was very full, but his hips and lower limbs were small.

Mr. Webster had his first great sorrow then. His eldest, and at that time his only, daughter died at Washington, and the next year her mother followed her to the grave. This estimable lady, whose maiden name was Grace Fletcher, was one year older than Mr. Webster, and was the daughter of a New Hampshire clergyman. While on her way to Washington with her husband,

the December after he had been re-elected United States Senator by a nearly two-thirds vote in each branch of the "General Court" of Massachusetts, she was taken fatally ill at the house of Mr. Webster's friend, Dr. Perkins, where they were guests.

Mr. Webster had begun at that time to be disturbed about his money matters, although he should have been in a prosperous pecuniary condition. His professional income could not have been less than twenty thousand dollars a year, and he had just received seventy thousand dollars as his five per cent. fee as counsel for the claimants before the Commissioners on Spanish Claims, but he had begun to purchase land and was almost always harassed for ready money.



EDWARD EVERETT.

Edward Everett, who was a member of the Massachusetts delegation in the House, had won early fame as a popular preacher of the gospel, as a professor at Harvard College, and as the editor of the *North American Review*. Placed by his marriage above want, he became noted for his profound learning and persuasive eloquence. At times he was almost electrical in his utterances; his reasoning was logical and luminous,

and his remarks always gave evidence of careful study. As a politician Mr. Everett was not successful. The personification of self-discipline and dignity, he was too much like an intellectual icicle to find favor with the masses, and he was deficient in courage when any bold step was to be taken.

George McDuffie, who represented the Edgefield District of South Carolina, had been taken from labor in a blacksmith's shop by Mr. Calhoun and became the grateful champion of his patron in the House. He was a spare, grim-looking man, who was an admirer of Milton, and who was never known to jest or to smile. As a debater he had few equals in the House, but he failed when, during the discussion of the Panama Mission question, he opened his batteries upon Mr. Webster. The "expounder of the Constitution" retorted with great force, reminding the gentleman from South Carolina that noisy declamation was not logic, and that he should not apply coarse epithets to the President, who could not reply to them. Mr. Webster then went on to say that he would furnish the gentleman from South Carolina with high authority on the point to which he had objected, and quoted from a speech by Mr. Calhoun which effectually extinguished Mr. McDuffie.

Tristam Burgess, of Rhode Island, who had a snowy head and a Roman nose, was called "the bald eagle of the House." Although under fifty years of age, his white hair and bent form gave him a patriarchal look and added to the effect of his fervid eloquence and his withering sarcasm. A man of iron heart, he was ever anxious to meet his antagonists, haughty in his rude self-confidence, and exhaustive in the use of every expletive of abuse permitted by parliamentary usage. In debate he resembled one of the old soldiers who

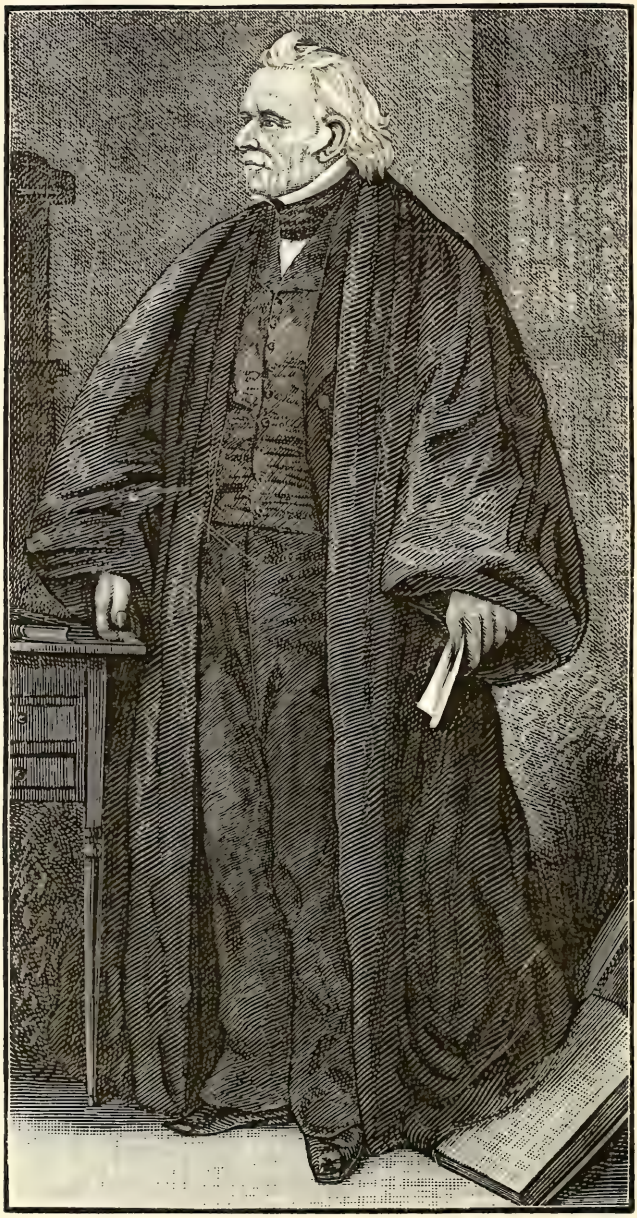
fought on foot or on horseback, with heavy or light arms, a battle-axe or a spear. The champion of the North, he divided the South and thrashed and slashed as did old Horatius, when with his good sword he stood upon the bridge and with his single arm defended Rome.

George Kremer, of Pennsylvania, was probably the most unpopular man in the House. An anonymous letter had appeared just before the election of President by the Representatives denouncing an "unholy coalition" between Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay, by which the support of the friends of the latter had been transferred to the former, "as the planter does his negroes, or the farmer his team and horses." Mr. Clay at once published a card, over his signature, in which he called the writer "a base and infamous calumniator, a dastard, and a liar." Mr. Kremer replied, admitting that he had written the letter, but in such a manner that his political friends were ashamed of his cowardice, while the admirers of Mr. Clay were very indignant—the more so as they suspected that Mr. James Buchanan had instigated the letter.

Mr. Henry W. Dwight, of Massachusetts, a good specimen of "a sound mind in a sound body," gave great attention to the appropriation bills, and secured liberal sums for carrying on the various departments of the Government. His most formidable antagonist was a self-styled reformer and physical giant, Mr. Thomas Chilton, of Kentucky, who had been at one period of his life a Baptist preacher. He declared on the floor in debate that he was pledged to his constituents to endeavor to retrench the expenses of the General Government, to diminish the army and navy, to abridge the number of civil and diplomatic officials, and, above all,

to cut down the pay of Congressmen. He made speeches in support of all these "reforms," but did not succeed in securing the discharge of a soldier, a sailor, a diplomatist, or a clerk, neither did he reduce the appropriations one single cent. The erratic Mr. David Crockett was then a member of the House, but had not attracted public attention, although the Jackson men were angry because he, one of Old Hickory's officers in the Creek War, was a devoted adherent of Henry Clay for the Presidency. One of his colleagues in the Tennessee delegation was Mr. James K. Polk, a rigid and uncompromising Presbyterian, a political disciple of Macon, and a man of incorruptible honesty.

Prominent among the Representatives from the State of New York were Messrs. Gulian C. Verplanck and Thomas J. Oakley, members of the legal profession, who were statesmen rather than politicians. Mr. George C. Washington, of Maryland, was the great-nephew of "the Father of his country," and had inherited a portion of the library at Mount Vernon, which he subsequently sold to the Boston Athenæum. Messrs. Elisha Whittlesey and Samuel Vinton, Representatives from Ohio, were afterward for many years officers of the Federal Government and residents at Washington. Mr. Jonathan Hunt, of Vermont, a lawyer of ability, and one of the companions chosen by Mr. Webster, was the father of that gifted artist, William Morris Hunt, whose recent death was so generally regretted. Mr. Silas Wright, of New York, was then attracting attention in the Democratic party, of which he became a great leader, and which would have elected him President had he not shortened his life by intemperance. He was a solid, square-built man, with an impassive, ruddy face. He claimed to be a good farmer, but no orator,



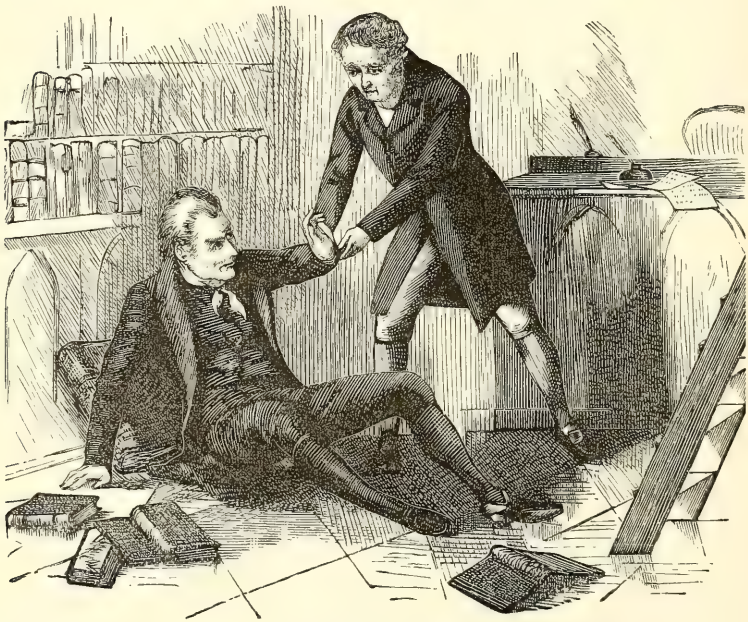
84 JUDGE STORY IN HIS OFFICIAL ROBES.

yet he was noted for the compactness of his logic, which was unenlivened by a figure of speech or a flight of fancy.

The Supreme Court then sat in the room in the basement of the Capitol, now occupied as a law library. It has an arched ceiling supported by massive pillars that obstruct the view, and is very badly ventilated. But it is rich in traditions of hair-powder, queues, ruffled shirts, knee-breeches, and buckles. Up to that time no Justice had ever sat upon the bench in trousers, nor had any lawyer ventured to plead in boots or wearing whiskers. Their Honors, the Chief Justice and the Associate Justices, wearing silk judicial robes, were treated with the most profound respect. When Mr. Clay stopped, one day, in an argument, and advancing to the bench, took a pinch of snuff from Judge Washington's box, saying, "I perceive that your Honor sticks to the Scotch," and then proceeded with his case, it excited astonishment and admiration. "Sir," said Mr. Justice Story, in relating the circumstance to a friend, "I do not believe there is a man in the United States who could have done that but Mr. Clay."

Chief Justice John Marshall, who had then presided in the Supreme Court for more than a quarter of a century, was one of the last survivors of those officers of the Revolutionary Army who had entered into civil service. He was a tall, gaunt man, with a small head and bright black eyes. He used to wear an unbrushed long-skirted black coat, a badly fitting waistcoat, and knee-breeches, a voluminous white cambric cravat, generally soiled, and black worsted stockings, with low shoes and silver buckles. When upward of seventy years of age he still relished the pleasures of the quoit club or the whist table, and to the last his right hand never forgot its cunning with the billiard cue.

Nor did the Chief Justice ever lose his relish for a joke, even at his own expense. In the Law Library one day he fell from a step-ladder, bruising himself severely and scattering an armful of books in all directions. An attendant, full of alarm, ran to assist him, but his Honor drily remarked, "That time I was completely floored."

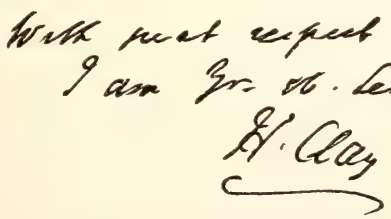


"COMPLETELY FLOORED."

Bushrod Washington, who had been appointed to the Supreme Court by President John Adams, was by inheritance the owner of Mount Vernon, where his remains now lie, near those of his illustrious uncle, George Washington. He was a small, insignificant-looking man, deprived of the sight of one eye by excessive study, negligent of dress, and an immoderate

snuff-taker. He was a rigid disciplinarian and a great stickler for etiquette, and on one occasion he sat for sixteen hours without leaving the bench. He was also a man of rare humor.

Christmas was the popular holiday season at Washington sixty years ago, the descendants of the Maryland Catholics joining the descendants of the Virginia Episcopalians in celebrating the advent of their Lord. The colored people enjoyed the festive season, and there was scarcely a house in Washington in which there was not a well-filled punch bowl. In some antique silver bowls was "Daniel Webster punch," made of Medford rum, brandy, champagne, arrack, maraschino, strong green tea, lemon juice, and sugar; in other less expensive bowls was found a cheaper concoction. But punch abounded everywhere, and the bibulous found Washington a rosy place, where jocund mirth and joyful recklessness went arm in arm to flout vile melancholy, and kick, with ardent fervor, dull care out of the window. Christmas carols were sung in the streets by the young colored people, and yule logs were burned in the old houses where the fireplaces had not been bricked up.




HENRY CLAY, born in Virginia, April 12th, 1777; United States Senator from Kentucky, 1806-1807, and again 1810–1811; Representative from Kentucky, 1811–1814; negotiator of the treaty of Ghent, 1815; Representative in Congress, 1815–1820, and 1823–1825; Secretary of State under President Adams, 1825–1829; United States Senator from Kentucky, 1831–1842, and 1844, until he died at Washington City, June 29th, 1852.

## CHAPTER VI.

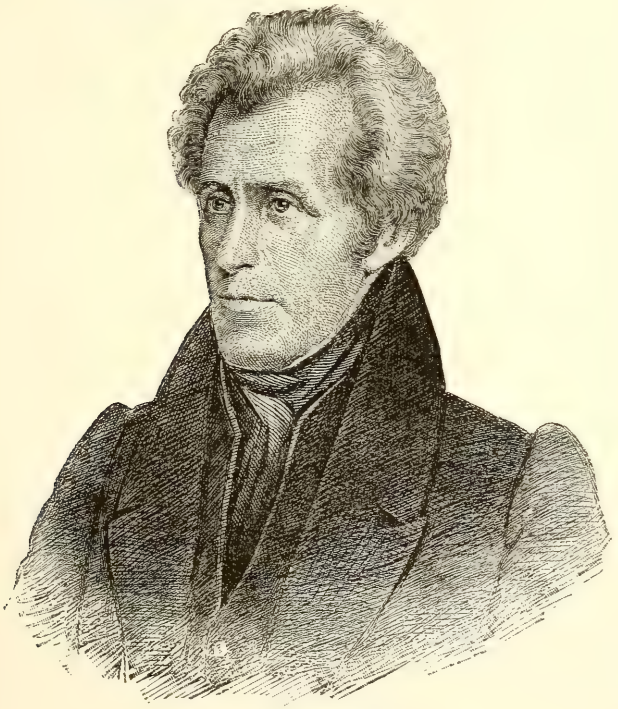
### THE POLITICAL MACHINE.

THE TENTH PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN—ELECTION OF GENERAL JACKSON—DEATH OF MRS. ANDREW JACKSON—THE INAUGURATION OF "OLD HICKORY"—RECEPTION AT THE WHITE HOUSE—AN EDITORIAL PHALANX—THE CIVIL SERVICE—DISCIPLINING A POSTMASTER-GENERAL—A FORTUNATE MAIL CONTRACTOR—THE SUNDAY MAIL CRUSADE.

AS the time for another Presidential election approached, the friends of General Jackson commenced active operations in his behalf. The prime mover in the campaign was General John Henry Eaton, then a Senator from Tennessee. He had published in 1818 a brief life of the hero of New Orleans, which he enlarged in 1824 and published with the title, "The Life of Andrew Jackson, Major-General in the Service of the United States, comprising a History of the War in the South from the Commencement of the Creek Campaign to the Termination of Hostilities Before New Orleans." The facts in it were obtained from General Jackson and his wife, but every incident of his life calculated to injure him in the public estimation was carefully suppressed. It was, however, the recognized text-book for Democratic editors and stump speakers, and although entirely unreliable, it has formed the basis for the lives of General Jackson since published.

President Adams enjoined neutrality upon his friends,

but some of them, acting with Democrats who were opposed to the election of General Jackson, had published and circulated, as an offset to General Eaton's book, a thick pamphlet entitled, "Reminiscences; or, an Extract from the Catalogue of General Jackson's Youthful Indiscretions, between the Age of Twenty-



ANDREW JACKSON.

three and Sixty," which contained an account of Jackson's fights, brawls, affrays, and duels, numbered from one to fourteen. Broadsides, bordered with wood-cuts of coffins, and known as "coffin hand-bills," narrated the summary and unjust execution as deserters of a number of militiamen in the Florida campaign whose

legal term of service had expired. Another handbill gave the account of General Jackson's marriage to Mrs. Robards before she had been legally divorced from her husband.

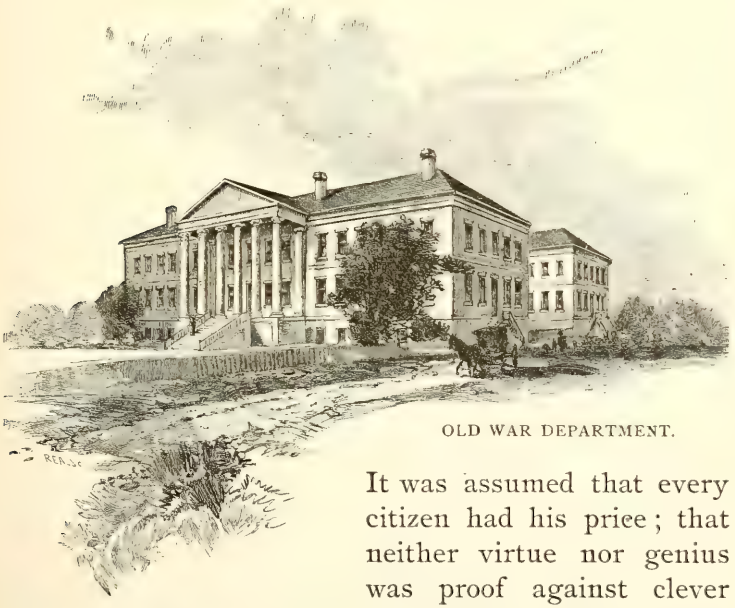
General Jackson's friends also had printed and circulated large editions of campaign songs, the favorite being "The Hunters of Kentucky," which commenced:

"You've heard, I s'pose, of New Orleans,
'Tis famed for youth and beauty,
There're girls of every hue, it seems,
From snowy white to sooty.
Now Packenham had made his brags,
If he that day was lucky,
He'd have those girls and cotton-bags
In spite of old Kentucky.
But Jackson, he was wide awake,
And was not scared at trifles,
For well he knew Kentucky's boys,
With their death-dealing rifles.
He led them down to cypress swamp,
The ground was low and mucky,
There stood John Bull in martial pomp,
And here stood old Kentucky.

"Oh! Kentucky, the hunters of Kentucky!"

After a political campaign of unprecedented bitterness, General Jackson was elected, receiving one hundred and seventy-eight electoral votes against eighty-three cast for John Quincy Adams, and so a new chapter was commenced in the social as well as the political chronicles of the National Capital. Those who had known the Presidential successors of Washington as educated and cultivated gentlemen, well versed in the courtesies of private life and of ceremonious statesmanship, saw them succeeded by a military chieftain, whose life had been "a battle and a march," thickly studded with personal difficulties and duels;

who had given repeated evidences of his disregard of the laws when they stood in the way of his imperious will; and who, when a United States Senator, had displayed no ability as a legislator. His election was notoriously the work of Martin Van Buren, inspired by Aaron Burr, and with his inauguration was initiated a sordidly selfish political system entirely at variance with the broad views of Washington and of Hamilton.



OLD WAR DEPARTMENT.

It was assumed that every citizen had his price; that neither virtue nor genius was proof against clever although selfish corruption; that political honesty was a farce; and that the only way of governing those knaves who elbowed their way up through the masses was to rule them by cunning more acute than their own and by knavery more subtle and calculating than theirs.

Before leaving his rural home in Tennessee, General Jackson had been afflicted by the sudden death of his

wife. "Aunt Rachel," as Mrs. Jackson was called by her husband's personal friends, had accompanied him to Washington when he was there as a Senator from Tennessee. She was a short, stout, unattractive, and uneducated woman, though greatly endeared to General Jackson. While he had been in the army she had carefully managed his plantation, his slaves, and his money matters, and her devotion to him knew no bounds. Her happiness was centered in his, and it was her chief desire to smoke her corn-cob pipe in peace at his side. When told that he had been elected President of the United States, she replied, "Well, for Mr. Jackson's sake I am glad of it, but for myself I am not." A few weeks later she was arrayed for the grave in a white satin costume which she had provided herself with to wear at the White House. After her funeral her sorrow-stricken husband came to Washington with a stern determination to punish those who had maligned her during the preceding campaign. Having been told that President Adams had sanctioned the publication of the slanders, he did not call at the White House, in accordance with usage, but paid daily visits to his old friends in the War Department. Mr. Adams, stung by this neglect, determined not to play the part of the conquered leader of the inauguration, and quietly removed to the house of Commodore Porter, in the suburbs, on the morning of the 3d of March.

The weather on the 4th of March, 1829, was serene and mild, and at an early hour Pennsylvania Avenue, then unpaved, with a double row of poplar trees along its centre, was filled with crowds of people, many of whom had journeyed immense distances on foot. The officials at Washington, who were friends of Mr. Adams,

had agreed not to participate in the inaugural ceremonies, and the only uniformed company of light infantry, commanded by Colonel Seaton, of the *National Intelligencer*, had declined to offer its services as an escort. A number of old Revolutionary officers, however, had hastily organized themselves, and waited on General Jackson to solicit the honor of forming his escort to the Capitol, an offer which was cordially accepted. The General rode in an open carriage which had been placed at his disposal, and was surrounded by these gallant veterans. The assembled thousands cheered lustily as their favorite passed along, every face radiant with defiant joy, and every voice shouting "Hurrah for Jackson!"

After the installation of John C. Calhoun as Vice-President in the Senate Chamber, the assembled dignitaries moved in procession through the rotunda to the east front of the Capitol. As the tall figure of the President-elect came out upon the portico and ascended the platform, uplifted hats and handkerchiefs waved a welcome, and shouts of "Hurrah for Jackson!" rent the air. Looking around for a moment into ten thousand upturned and exultant human faces, the President-elect removed his hat, took the manuscript of his address from his pocket, and read it with great dignity. When he had finished, Chief Justice Marshall administered the oath, and as the President, bending over the sacred Book, touched it with his lips, there arose such a shout as was never before heard in Washington, followed by the thunder of cannons, from two light batteries near by, echoed by the cannon at the Navy Yard and at the Arsenal. The crowd surged toward the platform, and had it not been that a ship's cable had been stretched across the portico steps would have

captured their beloved leader. As it was, he shook hands with hundreds, and it was with some difficulty that he could be escorted back to his carriage and along Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House. Meanwhile Mr. Adams, who had refused to participate in the pageant, was taking his usual constitutional horseback exercise when the thunders of the cannon reached his ears and notified him that he was again a private citizen.

The broad sidewalks of Pennsylvania Avenue were again packed as the procession returned from the Capitol. "I never saw such a crowd," wrote Daniel Webster to a friend. "Persons have come five hundred miles to see General Jackson, and they really seem to think that the country is rescued from some dreadful danger." Hunters of Kentucky and Indian fighters of Tennessee, with sturdy frontiersmen from the Northwest, were mingled in the throng with the more cultured dwellers on the Atlantic slope.

On their arrival at the White House, the motley crowd clamored for refreshments and soon drained the barrels of punch, which had been prepared, in drinking to the health of the new Chief Magistrate. A great deal of china and glassware was broken, and the East Room was filled with a noisy mob. At one time General Jackson, who had retreated until he stood with his back against the wall, was protected by a number of his friends, who formed a living barrier about him. Such a scene had never before been witnessed at the White House, and the aristocratic old Federalists saw, to their disgust, men whose boots were covered with the red mud of the unpaved streets standing on the damask satin-covered chairs to get a sight at the President of their choice.

Late in the afternoon President Jackson sat down to dinner with Vice-President Calhoun and a party of his personal friends, the central dish on the table being a sirloin from a prize ox, sent to him by John Merkle, a butcher of Franklin Market, New York. Before retiring that night, the President wrote to the donor: "Permit me, sir, to assure you of the gratification which I felt in being enabled to place on my table so fine a specimen from your market, and to offer you my sincere thanks for so acceptable a token of your regard for my character."

This was naturally the commencement of a series of presents which poured in on President Jackson during the eight years of his administration. So palpable a bid for other tokens of regard for the President's character could hardly fail to evoke responses. From the days of Solomon it has been true that "a man's gift maketh room for him," and though many of Jackson's gift-senders failed to find the room made, yet it was true nevertheless that room was seldom made where the gifts were not forthcoming, so come the gifts did in abundance.

The Democratic journalists from all parts of the country were also well represented at the inauguration, attracted, doubtless, by this luring, semi-official declaration in the *Telegraph:* "We know not what line of policy General Jackson will adopt. We take it for granted, however, that he will reward his friends and punish his enemies."

The leader of this editorial phalanx was Amos Kendall, a native of Dunstable, Massachusetts, who had by pluck and industry acquired an education and migrated westward in search of fame and fortune. Accident made him an inmate of Henry Clay's house and the

tutor of his children; but many months had not elapsed before the two became political foes, and Kendall, who had become the conductor of a Democratic newspaper, triumphed, bringing to Washington the official vote of Kentucky for Andrew Jackson. He found at the National metropolis other Democratic editors, who, like himself, had labored to bring about the political revolution, and they used to meet daily at the house of a preacher-politician, Rev. Obadiah B. Brown, who had strongly advocated Jackson's election. Mr. Brown, who was a stout, robust man, with a great fund of anecdotes, was a clerk in the Post Office Department during the week, while on Sundays he performed his ministerial duties in the Baptist Church.

Organizing under the lead of Amos Kendall, whose lieutenants were the brilliant but vindicative Isaac Hill, of New Hampshire; the scholarly Nathaniel Greene, of Massachusetts; the conservative Gideon Welles, of Connecticut; the jovial Major Mordecai M. Noah, of New York, and the energetic Dabney S. Carr, of Maryland, the allied editors claimed their rewards. They were not to be appeased by sops of Government advertising, or by the appointment of publisher of the laws of the United States in the respective States, but they demanded some of the most lucrative public offices as their share of the spoils. No sooner did General Jackson reach Washington then they made a systematic attack upon him, introducing and praising one another, and reciprocally magnifying their faithful services during the canvass so successfully ended. The result was that soon after the inauguration nearly fifty of those editors who had advocated his election were appointed to official Federal positions as rewards for political services rendered.

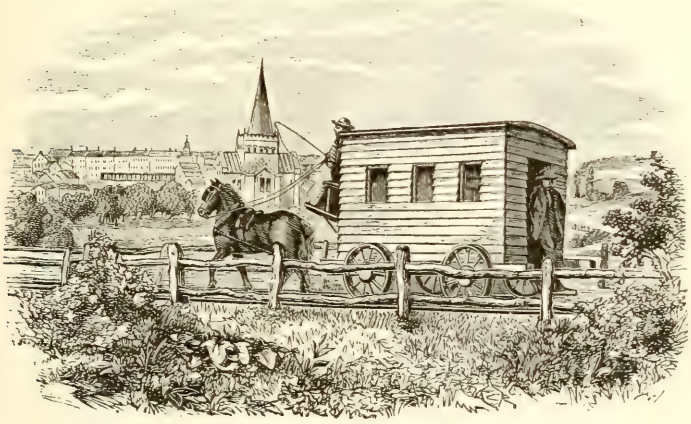
Up to that time the national elections in the United States had not been mere contests for the possession of Federal offices—there was victory and there was defeat; but the quadrennial encounters affected only the heads of departments, and the results were matters of comparative indifference to the subordinate official drudges whose families depended on their pay for meat and bread. A few of these department clerks were Revolutionary worthies; others had followed the Federal Government from New York or Philadelphia; all had expected to hold their positions for life. Some of these desk-slaves had originally been Federalists, others Democrats; and while there was always an Alexander Hamilton in every family of the one set, there was as invariably a Thomas Jefferson in every family of the other set. But no subordinate clerk had ever been troubled on account of his political faith by a change of the Administration, and the sons generally succeeded their fathers when they died or resigned. Ordinarily, these clerks were good penmen and skillful accountants, toiling industriously eight hours every week day without dreaming of demanding a month's vacation in the summer, or insisting upon their right to go to their homes to vote in the fall. National politics was to them a matter of profound indifference until, after the inauguration of General Jackson, hundreds of them found themselves decapitated by the Democratic guillotine, without qualifications for any other employment had the limited trade of Washington afforded any. Many of them were left in a pitiable condition, but when the *Telegraph* was asked what these men could do to ward off starvation, the insolent reply was, "Root, hog, or die!" Some of the new political brooms swept clean, and made a great show of reform, notably Amos

Kendall, who was appointed Fourth Auditor of the Treasury, and who soon after exulted over the discovery of a defalcation of a few hundred dollars in the accounts of his predecessor, Dr. Tobias Watkins.

Postmaster-General McLean, of Ohio, who had been avowedly a Jackson man while he was a member of Mr. Adams' Administration, rebelled against the removal of several of his most efficient subordinates because of their political action during the preceding Presidential campaign. At last he flatly told General Jackson that if he must remove those postmasters who had taken an active part in politics, he should impartially turn out those who had worked to secure the election of General Jackson, as well as those who had labored to re-elect Mr. Adams. To this General Jackson at first made no reply, but rose from his seat, puffing away at his pipe; and after walking up and down the floor two or three times, he stopped in front of his rebellious Postmaster-General, and said, "Mr. McLean, will you accept a seat upon the bench of the Supreme Court?" The judicial position thus tendered was accepted with thanks, and the Post-Office Department was placed under the direction of Major Barry, who was invited to take a seat in the Cabinet (never occupied by his predecessors), and who not only made the desired removals and appointments, but soon plunged the finances of the Department into a chaotic state of disorder.

Prominent among those "Jackson men" who received lucrative mail contracts from Postmaster-General Barry, was "Land Admiral" Reeside, an appellation he owed to the executive ability which he had displayed in organizing mail routes between distant cities. He was a very tall man, well formed, with florid complex-

ion red hair, and side whiskers. Very obligingly, he once had a horse belonging to a Senator taken from Pittsburg to Washington tied behind a stage, because the owner had affixed his "frank" to the animal's halter. He was the first mail contractor who ran his stages between Philadelphia and the West, by night as well as by day, and Mr. Joseph R. Chandler, of the United States *Gazette*, said that "the Admiral could



FIRST RAILROAD CAR.

leave Philadelphia on a six-horse coach with a hot johnny-cake in his pocket and reach Pittsburg before it could grow cold." He used to ridicule the locomotives when they were first introduced, and offer to bet a thousand dollars that no man could build a machine that would drag a stage from Washington to Baltimore quicker than his favorite team of iron-grays.

Mail robberies were not uncommon in those days, although the crime was punishable with imprisonment or death. One day one of Reeside's coaches was stopped near Philadelphia by three armed men, who

ordered the nine passengers to alight and stand in a line. One of the robbers then mounted guard, while the other two made the terrified passengers deliver up their money and watches, and then rifled the mail bags. They were soon afterward arrested, tried, convicted, and one was sentenced to imprisonment in the penitentiary, while the other two were condemned to be hung. Fortunately for one of the culprits, named Wilson, he had



FIRST LOCOMOTIVE ENGINE.

some years previously, at a horse-race near Nashville, Tennessee, privately advised General Jackson to withdraw his bets on a horse which he was backing, as the jockey had been ordered to lose the race. The General was very thankful for this information, which enabled him to escape a heavy loss, and he promised his informant that he would befriend him whenever an opportunity should offer. When reminded of this promise,

after Wilson had been sentenced to be hanged, Jackson promptly commuted the sentence to ten years imprisonment in the penitentiary.

When Admiral Reeside was carrying the mails between New York and Washington, there arose a formidable organization in opposition to the Sunday mail service. The members of several religious denominations were prominent in their demonstrations, and in Philadelphia, chains, secured by padlocks, were stretched across the streets on Sundays to prevent the passage of the mail-coaches. The subject was taken up by politicians, and finally came before the House of Representatives, where it was referred to the Committee on Post-Roads, of which Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, was then the chairman. The Rev. Obadiah B. Brown, who had meanwhile been promoted in the Post-office Department, wrote a report on the subject for Colonel Johnson, which gave "the killer of Tecumseh" an extended reputation, and was the first step toward his election as Vice-President, a few years later.



JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN was born in South Carolina, March 18th, 1782: was a Representative in Congress, 1811–1817; Secretary of War, 1817–1825; Vice-President, 1825–1832; United States Senator, 1833–1843; Secretary of State, 1844–1845; United States Senator from 1845 until his death at Washington City, March 31st, 1850.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE KITCHEN CABINET.

JACKSON'S FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE—THE KITCHEN CABINET—BLAIR, OF THE GLOBE—WASHINGTON NEWSPAPERS AND NEWS—THE FIRST LADY-BIRD OF THE PRESS—NATHANIEL P. WILLIS—PETER FORCE—SOCIAL ENJOYMENTS—MRS. TROLLOPE ON WASHINGTON SOCIETY—ATTEMPT TO OUST A VETERAN FROM OFFICE—PAYMENT OF THE CLAIMS ON FRANCE.

WHEN the Twenty-first Congress assembled, on the 7th of December, 1829, General Jackson sent in his first annual message, which naturally attracted some attention. Meeting his old and intimate friend, General Armstrong, the next day, the President said, "Well, Bob, what do the people say of my message?" "They say," replied General Armstrong, "that it is first-rate, but nobody believes that you wrote it." "Well," good-naturedly replied Old Hickory, "don't I deserve just as much credit for picking out the man who could write it?" Although the words of this and of the subsequent messages were not General Jackson's, the ideas were, and he always insisted on having them clearly expressed. It was in his first message, by the way, that he invited the attention of Congress to the fact that the charter of the United States Bank would expire in 1836, and asserted that it had "failed in the great end of establishing a uniform and sound currency." This was the beginning of that fierce political

contest which resulted in the triumph of General Jackson and the overthrow of the United States Bank.

General Jackson rarely left the White House, where he passed the greater portion of his time in his office in the second story, smoking a corn-cob pipe with a long reed stem. He was at the commencement of his Presidential term sixty-two years of age, tall, spare, with a high forehead, from which his gray hair was brushed back, a decisive nose, searching, keen eyes, and, when good-natured, an almost childlike expression about his mouth. A self-reliant, prejudiced, and often very irascible old man, it was a very difficult task to manage him. Some of his Cabinet advisers made it a point to be always with him, to prevent others from ingratiating themselves into his good will, and they were thus chronicled in a ballad of the time:

"King Andrew had five trusty 'squires,
Whom he held his bid to do;
He also had three pilot-fish,
To give the sharks their cue.
There was Mat and Lou and Jack and Lev,
And Roger, of Taney hue,
And Blair, the book,
And Kendall, chief cook,
And Isaac, surnamed the true."

Mat. Van Buren was Secretary of State, Lou. McLane Secretary of the Treasury, John Branch was Secretary of the Navy, Lev. Woodbury was his successor, and Roger B. Taney was Attorney-General. Blair, Kendall, and Isaac Hill were also known as "the kitchen cabinet."

The confidential advisers of General Jackson lost no time in establishing a daily newspaper which would speak his sentiments and sound a key-note for the guidance of his followers. The *Washington Globe* was

accordingly started on an immediate paying basis, as it had the name of every Federal office-holder whose salary exceeded one thousand dollars on its subscription list. The paper was sent them, and in due time the bill for a year. If a remittance was made, well and good; if payment was refused, the delinquent was told informally that he could pay his subscription to the *Globe*, or be replaced by some one else who would pay it. It was owned and edited by Blair & Rives, Rives attending to the business department of the establishment. Mr. Blair had been the partner of Amos Kendall in the publication of the Frankfort *Argus*, and they had both deserted Henry Clay when they enlisted in the movement which gave the electoral vote of Kentucky to General Jackson, and joined in the cry of "bargain and corruption" raised against their former friend. It is related that the first interview between Clay and Blair after this desertion was a very awkward one for the latter, who felt that he had behaved shabbily. Clay had ridden over on horseback from Lexington to Frankfort, in the winter season, on legal business, and on alighting from his horse at the tavern door found himself confronting Blair, who was just leaving the house. "How do you do, Mr. Blair?" inquired the great commoner, in his silvery tones and blandest manner, at the same time extending his hand. Blair mechanically took the tendered hand, but was evidently nonplussed, and at length said, with an evident effort, "Pretty well, I thank you, sir. How did you find the roads from Lexington here?" "The roads are very bad, Mr. Blair," graciously replied Clay, "very bad; and I wish, sir, that you would mend your ways."

Mr. Blair made it a rule to defend in the columns of

the *Globe* the acts of Jackson's Administration, right or wrong, and he waged merciless warfare against those who opposed them. When Colonel William R. King, of Alabama, once begged him to soften an attack upon an erring Democrat, Mr. Blair replied, "No! let it tear his heart out." With all his political insolence, however, he possessed remarkable kindness, and a more indulgent father and truer friend was never known in Washington.

It was this remarkable combination of qualities which gave this same Mr. Blair a peculiar conspicuity near the close of the Civil War. Acting solely on his own responsibility, he went to Richmond, where he obtained from Jefferson Davis, his personal friend, a letter declaring his willingness to enter into an official conference for the restoration of peace. This led to the famous Hampton Roads conference, which President Lincoln attended in person, meeting several distinguished Southern leaders, but it did not produce any direct result on the war.

The Washington papers, up to this time, contained very little of what has since been known as local news. A parade, an inauguration, or the funeral of a distinguished person would receive brief mention, but the pleasant gossip of the day was entirely ignored, and mail facilities were poor. It was then necessary for the correspondent of a paper in a northern city to mail his letter at the post-office before twelve o'clock at night to insure its departure by the early morning's mail northward. Letters written to New York did not, consequently, appear until the second day after they were written, while those sent to Boston rarely appeared before the fourth day. The people then were better posted as to what transpired at the Nation's

Capital than they are now, when dispatches can be sent in a few moments at any time of day or night.

Mrs. Anne Royall began an enterprise in personal literature. She managed to secure an old Ramage printing-press and a font of battered long-primer type, with which, aided by runaway apprentices and tramping journeymen printers, she published, on Capitol Hill, for several years, a small weekly sheet called the *Huntress*. Every person of any distinction who visited Washington received a call from Mrs. Royall, and if they subscribed for the *Huntress* they were described in the next number in a complimentary manner, but if they declined she abused them without mercy. When young she was a short, plump, and not bad-looking woman, but as she advanced in years her flesh disappeared, and her nose seemed to increase in size; but her piercing black eyes lost none of their fire, while her tongue wagged more abusively when her temper was roused. John Quincy Adams described her as going about "like a virago-errant in enchanted armor, redeeming herself from the cramps of indigence by the notoriety of her eccentricities and the forced currency they gave to her publications."

Mrs. Royall's tongue at last became so unendurable that she was formally indicted by the Grand Jury as a common scold, and was tried in the Circuit Court before Judge Cranch. His Honor charged the jury at length, reviewing the testimony and showing that, if found guilty, she must be ducked, in accordance with the English law in force in the District of Columbia. The jury found her guilty, but her counsel begged his Honor, the Judge, to weigh the matter and not be the first to introduce a ducking-stool. The plea prevailed and she was let off with a fine.

The first "Society Letters," as they are called, written from Washington, were by Nathaniel P. Willis, to the New York *Mirror*. Willis was at that time a foppish, slender young man, with a profusion of curly, light hair, and was always dressed in the height of fashion. He had, while traveling in Europe, mingled with the aristocratic classes, and he affected to look down upon the masses; but with all his snobbishness he had a wonderful faculty for endowing trifling occurrences with interest, and his letters have never been surpassed. He possessed a sunny nature, full of poetry, enthusiasm, and cheerfulness, and was always willing to say a pleasant word for those who treated him kindly, and never sought to retaliate on his enemies.



NATHANIEL P. WILLIS.

Willis first introduced steel pens at Washington, having brought over from England some of those made by Joseph Gillott, at Birmingham. Before this goose-quill pens had been exclusively used, and there was in each House of Congress and in each Department a penmaker, who knew what degree of flexibility and breadth of point each writer desired. Every gentleman had to carry a penknife, and to have in his desk a hone to sharpen it on, giving the finishing touches on one of his boots. Another new invention

of that epoch was the lucifer match-box, which superseded the large tin tinder-box with its flint and steel. The matches were in the upper portion of a pasteboard case about an inch in diameter and six inches in length and in a compartment beneath them was a bottle containing a chemical preparation, into which the brimstone-coated end of the match was dipped and thus ignited.

The Mayor of Washington, during a portion of the Jackson Administration, was Peter Force, a noble specimen of those who, before the existence of trades unions, used to serve an apprenticeship to the "art preservative of arts," and graduate from the printing-office qualified to fill any political position. Fond of American history, Mr. Force, while printing the *Biennial Register*, better known as the Blue Book from the color of its binding, began to collect manuscripts, books, and pamphlets, many of which had been thrown away in the executive departments as rubbish, and were purchased by him from the dealers in waste paper. In 1833 he originated the idea of compiling and publishing a documentary history of the country, under the title of the *American Archives*, and issued a number of large folio volumes, the profits going to the politicians who secured the necessary appropriations from Congress. He was emphatically a gentleman—tall, stalwart, with bushy black hair, and large, expressive eyes, which would beam with joy whenever a friend brought him a rare autograph or pamphlet.

Assemblies were held once a week between Christmas Day and Ash Wednesday, to which all of the respectable ladies of the city who danced were invited. It was also customary for those of the Cabinet officers and other high officials who kept house to give at least

one evening party during each session of Congress, invitations for which were issued. The guests at these parties used to assemble at about eight o'clock, and after taking off their wraps in an upper room they descended to the parlor, where the host and hostess received them. The older men then went to the punch-bowl to criticise the "brew" which it contained, while the young people found their way to the dining-room, almost invariably devoted to dancing. The music was a piano and two violins, and one of the musicians called the figures for the cotillions and contra-dances. Those who did not dance elbowed their way through the crowd, conversing with acquaintances, the men frequently taking another glass of punch. At ten the guests were invited to the supper-table, which was often on the wide back porch which every Washington house had in those days. The table was always loaded with evidences of the culinary skill of the lady of the house. There was a roast ham at one end, a saddle of venison or mutton at the other end, and some roasted poultry or wild ducks midway; a great variety of home-baked cake was a source of pride, and there was never any lack of punch, with decanters of Madeira. The diplomats gave champagne, but it was seldom seen except at the legations. At eleven there was a general exodus, and after the usual scramble for hats, cloaks, and over-shoes the guests entered their carriages. Sometimes a few intimate friends of the hostess lingered to enjoy a contra-dance or to take a parting drink of punch, but by midnight the last guest departed, and the servants began to blow out the candles with which the house had been illuminated.

In Jackson's first Administration the country was shocked by the appearance of a book entitled, *The*

*Domestic Manners of Americans*, by Mrs. Frances Trollope. She was a bright little Englishwoman, who had come to this country and established a bazaar at Cincinnati, which proved a failure. So she sought revenge and wealth by a caricature sketch of our pioneer life, founded on fact, but very unpalatable. Expectoration was her pet abomination, and she was inclined to think that this "most vile and universal habit of chewing tobacco" was the cause of a remarkable peculiarity in the male physiognomy of Americans, the almost uniform thinness and compression of their lips. So often did Mrs. Trollope recur to this habit that she managed to give one the impression that this country was in those days a sort of huge spittoon.

Mrs. Trollope first called attention to the fact that the American women did not consult the season in either the colors or style of their costumes, never wore boots, and walked in the middle of winter with their pretty little feet pinched into miniature slippers incapable of excluding as much moisture as might bedew a primrose.

Removals from office that places might be provided for Jackson men were the order of the day, but President Jackson was not disposed to displace any veteran soldier. Among other victims designated for removal by the politicians was General Solomon Van Rensselaer, whose gallant services against Great Britain in the War of 1812 had been rewarded by an election to the House of Representatives, followed by his appointment as Postmaster of Albany. He was a decided Federalist, and the petition for his removal was headed by Martin Van Buren and Silas Wright.

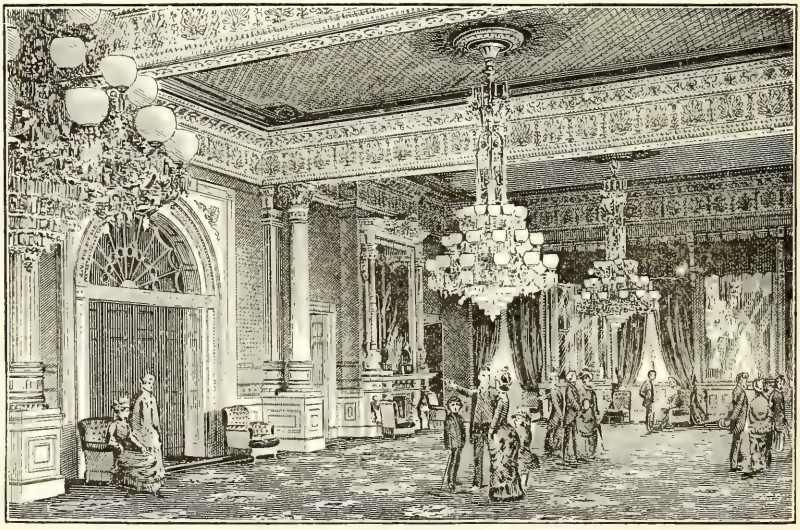
Visiting Washington, General Van Rensselaer received a cordial greeting from General Jackson at a

public reception, and then, taking a seat in a corner, he waited until the room was cleared, when he again approached the President, saying: "General Jackson, I have come here to talk to you about my office. The politicians want to take it from me, and they know I have nothing else to live upon." The President made no reply, till the aged Postmaster began to take off his coat in the most excited manner, when Old Hickory broke out with the inquiry: "What in Heaven's name are you going to do? Why do you take off your coat here?" "Well, sir, I am going to show you my wounds, which I received in fighting for my country against the English!" "Put it on at once, sir!" was the reply; "I am surprised that a man of your age should make such an exhibition of himself," and the eyes of the iron President were suffused with tears, as, without another word, he bade his ancient foe good evening.

The next day Messrs. Van Buren and Wright called at the White House and were shown up into the President's room, where they found him smoking a clay pipe. Mr. Wright soon commenced to solicit the removal of General Van Rensselaer, asserting that he had been known as a very active advocate of John Quincy Adams; that he had literally forfeited his place by his earnest opposition to the Jackson men, and that if he were not removed the new Administration would be seriously injured. He had hardly finished the last sentence, when Jackson sprang to his feet, flung his pipe into the fire, and exclaimed with great vehemence, "I take the consequences, sir; I take the consequences. By the Eternal! I will not remove the old man—I cannot remove him. Why, Mr. Wright, do you not know that he carries more than a pound of

British lead in his body ?" That settled the question, and General Van Rensselaer remained undisturbed as Postmaster at Albany through the Jackson Administration, although Martin Van Buren, when he came into power, promptly "bounced" him.

General Jackson's defiant disposition was manifested when, in a message to Congress, he recommended that a law be passed authorizing reprisals upon French



FAMOUS EAST ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE.

property in case provision should not be made for the payment of the long-standing claims against France at the approaching session of the French Chambers. Some of his Cabinet, having deemed this language too strong, had prevailed upon the President's private secretary, Major Donelson, to modify it, and to make it less irritating and menacing. No sooner was it discovered by General Jackson than he flew into a great excitement, and when Mr. Rives entered his

private office to obtain it for printing, he found the old General busily engaged in re-writing it according to the original copy. "I know them French," said he. "They won't pay unless they're made to."

The French people were indignant when this message reached Paris, and when the Chamber of Deputies finally provided for the payment of the claims, a proviso was inserted ordering the money to be withheld until the President of the United States had apologized for the language used. This General Jackson flatly refused to do, and the "Ancient Allies" of the Revolution were on the verge of hostilities, when both nations agreed to submit their differences to Great Britain. The affair was speedily arranged, and France paid five millions of dollars for French spoliations into the Treasury of the United States, where it has since remained.

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SILAS WRIGHT, JR., was born at Amherst, Massachusetts, May 24th, 1795; was a Representative from New York in Congress, 1827–1829; Comptroller of New York, 1829–1833; United States Senator, 1833–1844; Governor of New York, 1844–1846; retired to his farm at Canton, New York, and died there, August 27th, 1847.

## CHAPTER VIII.

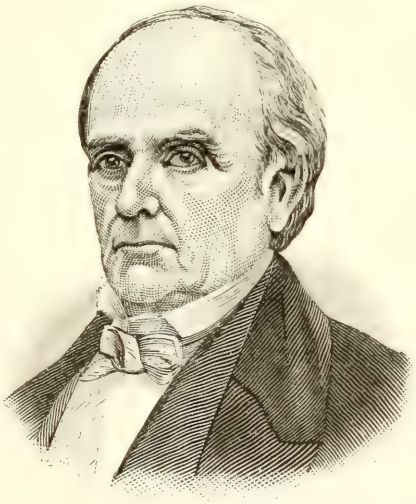
### BATTLE OF THE GIANTS.

THE GREAT SENATORIAL DEBATE—ATTACK ON NEW ENGLAND—WEBSTER'S REPLY TO HAYNE—NULLIFICATION NIPPED IN THE BUD—SOCIETY IN JACKSON'S DAY—MRS. GENERAL EATON—A CHIVALROUS PRESIDENT—THEATRICALS—THE GREAT TRAGEDIAN—MINOR AMUSEMENTS—EXECUTIVE CHARITY—SWARTWOUTING—THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER.

AN unimportant resolution concerning the public lands, introduced into the Senate early in 1830 by Senator Foote, of Connecticut (the father of Admiral Foote), led to a general debate, which has been since known as "the battle of the giants." The discussion embraced all the partisan issues of the time, especially those of a sectional nature, including the alleged rights of a State to set the Federal Government at defiance. The State Rights men in South Carolina, instigated by Mr. Calhoun, had been active during the preceding summer in collecting material for this discussion, and they had taken especial pains to request a search for evidence that Mr. Webster had shown a willingness to have New England secede from the Union during the second war with Great Britain. The vicinity of Portsmouth, where he had resided when he entered public life, was, to use his own words, "searched as with a candle. New Hampshire was explored from the mouth of the Merrimack to the White Hills."

Nor had Mr. Webster been idle. He was not an ex-

temporaneous speaker, and he passed the summer in carefully studying, in his intervals of professional duties, the great constitutional question which he afterward so brilliantly discussed. A story is told at Providence about a distinguished lawyer of that place—Mr. John Whipple—who was at Washington when Webster replied to Hayne, but who did not hear the speech, as he was engaged in a case before the Supreme Court when it was delivered. When a report of what Mr. Webster had said appeared in print, Mr. Whipple read it, and was haunted by the idea that he had heard or read it before. Meeting Mr. Webster soon afterward, he mentioned this idea to him and inquired whether it could possibly have any foundation in fact. "Certainly it has," replied Mr. Webster. "Don't you remember our conversations during the long walks we took together last summer at Newport, while in attendance on Story's court?" It flashed across Mr. Whipple's mind that Mr. Webster had then rehearsed the legal argument of his speech and had invited criticism.



DANIEL WEBSTER.

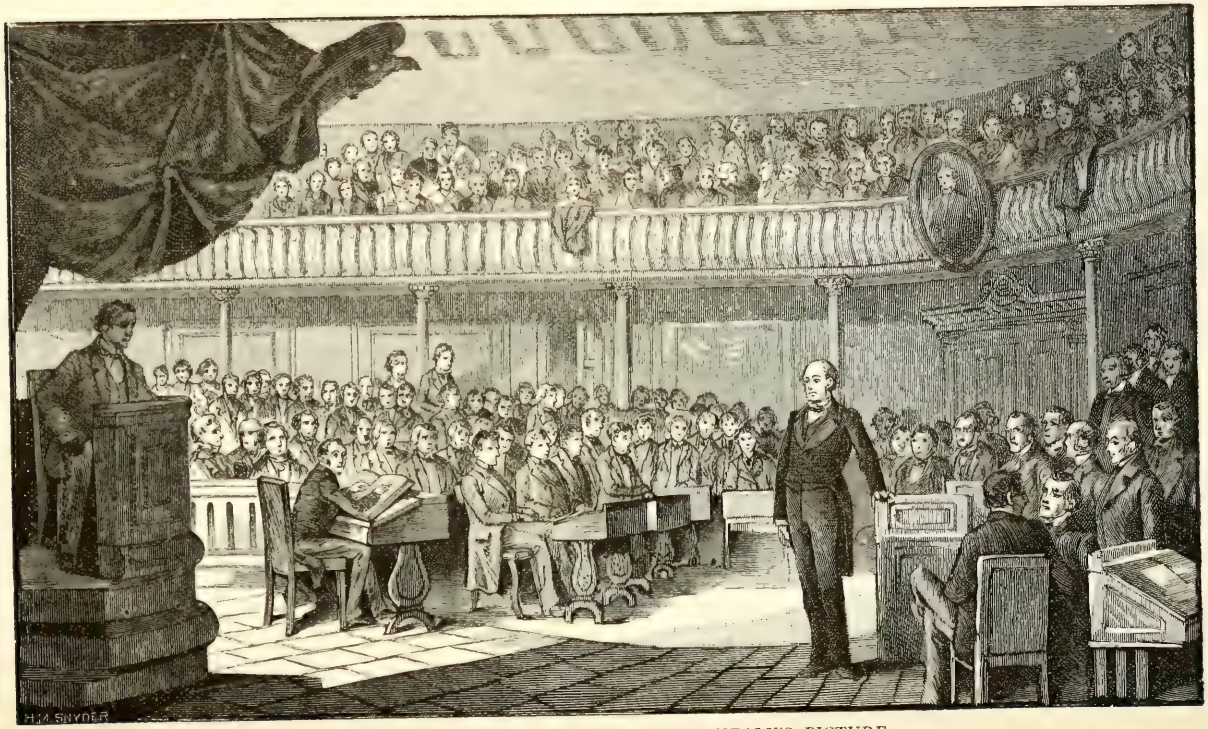
As the debate on the Foote resolution progressed, it revealed an evident intention to attack New England, and especially Massachusetts. This brought Mr. Web-

ter into the arena, and he concluded a brief speech by declaring that, as a true representative of the State which had sent him into the Senate, it was his duty, and a duty which he should fulfill, to place her history and her conduct, her honor and her character, in their just and proper light. A few days later, Mr. Webster heard his State and himself mercilessly attacked by General Hayne, of South Carolina, no mean antagonist. The son of a Revolutionary hero who had fallen a victim to British cruelty, highly educated, with a slender, graceful form, fascinating deportment, and a well-trained, mellifluous voice, the haughty South Carolinian entered the lists of the political tournament like Saladin to oppose the Yankee Cœur de Lion.



GENERAL ROBERT Y. HAYNE.

When Mr. Webster went to the Senate Chamber to reply to General Hayne, on Tuesday, January 20th, 1830, he felt himself master of the situation. Always careful about his personal appearance when he was to address an audience, he wore on that day the Whig uniform, which had been copied by the Revolutionary heroes—a blue dress-coat with bright buttons, a buff waistcoat, and a high, white cravat. Neither was he insensible to the benefits to be derived from publicity, and he had




WEBSTER'S REPLY TO HAYNE—AFTER HEALY'S PICTURE.

sent a request to Mr. Gales to report what he was to say himself, rather than to send one of his stenographers. The most graphic account of the scene in the Senate Chamber during the delivery of the speech was subsequently written virtually from Mr. Webster's dictation. Perhaps, like Mr. Healy's picture of the scene, it is rather high-colored.

Sheridan, after his forty days' preparation, did not commence his scathing impeachment of Warren Hastings with more confidence than was displayed by Mr. Webster when he stood up, in the pride of his manhood, and began to address the interested mass of talent, intelligence, and beauty around him. A man of commanding presence, with a well-knit, sturdy frame, swarthy features, a broad, thoughtful forehead, courageous eyes gleaming from beneath shaggy eyebrows, a quadrangular breadth of jawbone, and a mouth which bespoke strong will, he stood like a sturdy Roundhead sentinel on guard before the gates of the Constitution. Holding in profound contempt what is termed spread-eagle oratory, his only gesticulations were up-and-down motions of his arm, as if he was beating out with sledge-hammers his forcible ideas. His peroration was sublime, and every loyal American heart has since echoed the last words, "Liberty and union—now and forever—one and inseparable!"

Mr. Webster's speech, carefully revised by himself, was not published until the 23d of February, and large editions of it were circulated throughout the Northern States. The debate was continued, and it was the 21st of May before Colonel Benton, who had been the first defamer of New England, brought it to a close. The Northern men claimed for Mr. Webster the superiority, but General Jackson praised the speech of Mr. Hayne,

and deemed his picture worthy to occupy a place in the White House, thus giving expression to the general sentiment among the Southerners. This alarmed Mr. Van Buren, who was quietly yet shrewdly at work to defeat the further advancement of Mr. Calhoun, and he lost no time in demonstrating to the imperious old soldier who occupied the Presidential chair that the South Carolina doctrine of nullification could but prove destructive to the Union.

Mr. Calhoun was not aware of this intrigue, and, in order to strengthen his State Rights policy, he organized a public dinner on the anniversary of Jefferson's birthday, April 13th, 1830. When the toasts which were to be proposed were made public in advance, according to the custom, it was discovered that several of them were strongly anti-tariff and State Rights in sentiment—so much so that a number of Pennsylvania tariff Democrats declined to attend, and got up a dinner of their own. General Jackson attended the dinner, but he went late and retired early, leaving a volunteer toast, which he had carefully prepared at the White House, and which fell like a damper upon those at the dinner, while it electrified the North, "The Federal Union—it must and shall be maintained!" This toast, which could not be misunderstood, showed that General Jackson would not permit himself to be placed in the attitude of a patron of doctrines which could lead only to a dissolution of the Federal Government. But the Committee on Arrangements toned it down, so that it appeared in the official report of the dinner, "Our Federal Union—it must be preserved!"

This was a severe blow to Mr. Calhoun, who had labored earnestly to break down Mr. Adams' Administration, without respect to its measures, that a Demo-

cratic party might be built up which would first elect General Jackson, and then recognize Calhoun as legitimate successor to the Presidential chair. His discomfiture was soon completed by the publication of a letter from Mr. Crawford, which informed the President that Calhoun, when in the Cabinet of Monroe, proposed that "General Jackson should be punished in some form" for his high-handed military rule in Florida. Van Buren secretly fanned the flames of General Jackson's indignation, and adroitly availed himself of a "tempest in a tea-pot" to complete the downfall of his rival.

The woman used as a tool by Mr. Van Buren for the overthrow of Mr. Calhoun's political hopes was a picturesque and prominent figure in Washington society then and during the next fifty years. The National Metropolis in those days resembled, as has been well said, in recklessness and extravagance, the spirit of the English seventeenth century, so graphically portrayed in *Thackeray's Humorist*, rather than the dignified caste of the nineteenth cycle of Christianity. Laxity of morals and the coolest disregard possible characterized that period of our existence.

Mrs. General Eaton ruled Andrew Jackson as completely as he ruled the Democratic party. She was the daughter of William O'Neill, a rollicking Irishman, who was in his day the landlord of what was then the leading public house in Washington City. Among other Congressmen who were guests there was Andrew Jackson, then a Senator from Tennessee. It was here he became interested in the landlord's brilliant daughter Margaret, called by her friends "Peg" O'Neill. Before she was sixteen years of age she married a handsome naval officer, John Bowie Timberlake. He died—some say that he committed suicide—

at Port Mahon, in 1828, leaving his accounts as purser in a very mixed condition. After the death of Timberlake, Commodore Patterson ordered Lieutenant Randolph to take the purser's books and perform the duties



LIEUTENANT RANDOLPH'S ATTACK ON JACKSON.

of purser. On the return home of the Constitution it was discovered that Timberlake or Randolph was a defaulter to the Government to a very large amount. A court of inquiry was held on Randolph and he was

acquitted, but Amos Kendall, the Fourth Auditor of the Treasury Department, charged the defalcation to Randolph. President Jackson, notwithstanding the decision of the court, dismissed Lieutenant Randolph from the Navy, and refused to give him a hearing.

The Lieutenant, infuriated by disgrace and pecuniary ruin, in a state of excitement pulled the President's nose in the cabin of a steamboat at the Alexandria wharf. He was immediately seized and thrust on shore, the President declaring that he was able to punish him. He charged that Jackson dismissed him and sustained Kendall's decision in order to save General Eaton, who was Timberlake's bondsman, from having to make good the defalcation.

General Eaton, who had boarded with his friend, General Jackson, at O'Neill's tavern, soon afterward married the Widow Timberlake, who was then one of those examples of that Irish beauty, which, marked by good blood, so suggests both the Greek and the Spaniard, and yet at times presents a combination which transcends both. Her form, of medium height, straight and delicate, was of perfect proportions. Her skin was of that delicate white, tinged with red, which one often sees among even the poorer inhabitants of the Green Isle. Her dark hair, very abundant, clustered in curls about her broad, expressive forehead. Her perfect nose, of almost Grecian proportions, and finely curved mouth, with a firm, round chin, completed a profile of faultless outlines. She was in Washington City what Aspasia was in Athens—the cynosure by whose reflected radiance

> "Beauty lent her smile to wit,
> And learning by her star was lit."

General Jackson had come to Washington with a sad

heart, breathing vengeance against those who had defamed his wife during the Presidential canvass, thereby, as he thought, hastening her death. This made him the sworn and unyielding foe of all slanderers of women, and when some of the female tabbies of the Capital began to drag the name of his old friend "Peg," then the wife of General Eaton, through the mire, he was naturally indignant, and showed his respect for her by having her a frequent guest at the White House. Enchanting, ambitious, and unscrupulous, she soon held the old hero completely under her influence, and carried her griefs to him. Mr. Van Buren adroitly seconded her, and the gallant old soldier swore "by the Eternal" that the scandalmongers who had embittered the last years of his beloved wife, Rachel, should not triumph over his "little friend Peg."



MRS. EATON AT SIXTY-FOUR.

This was Van Buren's opportunity. He was a widower, keeping house at Washington, and as Secretary of State he was able to form an alliance with the bachelor Ministers of Great Britain and Russia, each of whom had spacious residences. A series of dinners, balls, and suppers was inaugurated at these three houses, and at each successive entertainment Mrs.

Eaton was the honored guest, who led the contra-dance, and occupied the seat at table on the right of the host. Some respectable ladies were so shocked by her audacity that they would leave a room when she entered it. She was openly denounced by clergymen, and she found herself in positions which would have covered almost any other woman in Washington with shame. Mrs. Eaton, who apparently did not possess a scruple as to the propriety of her course, evidently enjoyed the situation, and used to visit General Jackson every day with a fresh story of the insults paid her. Yet she gave no evidences of diplomacy nor of political sagacity, but was a mere beautiful, passionate, impulsive puppet, held up by General Jackson, while Mr. Van Buren adroitly pulled the strings that directed her movements.

Mr. Calhoun, whose wife was foremost among those ladies who positively refused to associate with Mrs. Eaton, said to a friend of General Jackson's, who endeavored to effect a reconciliation, that "the quarrels of women, like those of the Medes and Persians, admitted of neither inquiry nor explanation." He knew well, however, that it was no women's quarrel, but a political game of chess played by men who were using women as their pawns, and he lost the game. Van Buren and Eaton next tendered their resignations as Cabinet officers, which General Jackson refused to accept; whereupon the Cabinet officers whose wives declined to call on Mrs. Eaton resigned, and their resignations were promptly accepted. The whole city was in a turmoil. Angry men walked about with bludgeons, seeking "satisfaction;" duels were talked of; old friendships were severed; and every fresh indignity offered his "little friend Peg" endeared her

the more to General Jackson, who was duly grateful to Van Buren for having espoused her cause. "It is odd enough," wrote Daniel Webster to a personal friend, "that the consequences of this dispute in the social and fashionable world are producing great political effects, and may very probably determine who shall be successor to the present Chief Magistrate."

Junius Brutus Booth was the delight of the Washington playgoers in the Jackson Administration. His wonderful impersonations of Richard III. Iago, King Lear, Othello, Shylock, and Sir Giles Overreach were as grand as his private life was intemperate and eccentric. He was a short, dumpy man, with features resembling those of the Roman Emperors, before his nose was broken in a quarrel, and his deportment on the stage was imperially grand. He had a farm in Maryland, and at one time he undertook to supply a Washington hotel with eggs, milk, and chickens, but he soon gave it up. His instant and tremendous concentration of passion in his delineations overwhelmed his audience and wrought it into such enthusiasm that it partook of the fever of inspiration surging through his own veins. He was not lacking in the power to comprehend and portray with marvelous



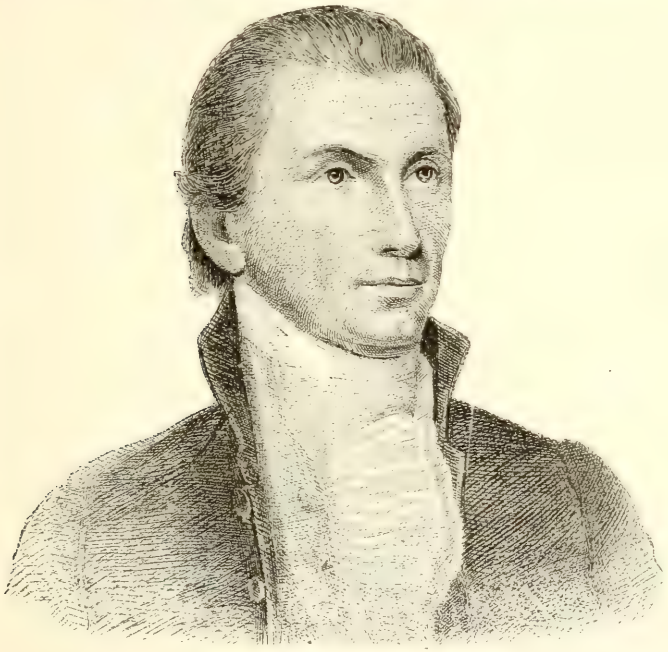
JUNIUS BRUTUS BOOTH.

and exquisite delicacy the subtle shades of character that Shakespeare loved to paint, and his impersonations were a delight to the refined scholar as well as the uncultivated backwoodsmen who crowded to his performances.

The Washington Theatre was not well patronized, but the strolling proprietors of minor amusements reaped rich harvests of small silver coin. The circus paid its annual visit, to the joy of the rural Congressmen and the negroes, who congregated around its sawdust ring, applauding each successive act of horsemanship and laughing at the repetition of the clown's old jokes; a daring rope-dancer, named Herr Cline, performed his wonderful feats on the tight rope and on the slack wire; Finn gave annual exhibitions of fancy glass-blowing; and every one went to see "the living skeleton," a tall, emaciated young fellow named Calvin Edson, compared with whom Shakespeare's starved apothecary was fleshy.

General Jackson turned a deaf ear to the numerous applications made to him for charity. At one time when he was President a large number of Irish immigrants were at work on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal in Georgetown, and, the weather being very hot, many of them were prostrated by sunstroke and bilious diseases. They were without medical aid, the necessities of life, or any shelter except the shanties in which they were crowded. Their deplorable condition led to the formation of a society of Irish-Americans, with the venerable Mr. McLeod, a noted instructor, as president. A committee from this Society waited on the President for aid, and Mr. McLeod made known the object of their visit. General Jackson interrupted him by saying that he "entirely disapproved of the Society; that

the fact of its existence would induce these fellows to come one hundred miles to get the benefit of it; that if the treasury of the United States were at his disposal it could not meet the demands that were daily made upon him, and he would not be driven from the White House a beggar-man, like old Jim Monroe."



JAMES MONROE.

Colonel Samuel Swartwout, of Hoboken, was an old personal friend of General Jackson, and when "the Hickory Broom" began to sweep out the old office-holders, in obedience to the maxim, "To the victors belong the spoils," the Colonel was an applicant for the then lucrative position of Collector of the Port of New York. Van Buren was against him, and used many arguments with Jackson to prevent the appoint-

ment; but, after a patient hearing, Old Hickory closed the case by bringing his fist down upon the table and exclaiming: "By the Eternal! Sam. Swartwout *shall* be Collector of the Port of New York!" He was appointed and became the prey of political swindlers, spending the public moneys right regally until his accounts were overhauled, and he "Swartwouted" (to use a word coined at the time) to avoid a criminal prosecution. He remained abroad for many years, and I think died in Europe.

Francis S. Key was United States Attorney for the district of Washington during the Jackson Administration. He was a small, active man, having an earnest and even anxious expression of countenance, as if care sat heavily upon him. In composing the heroic song of the "Star-Spangled Banner," after he had witnessed the unsuccessful night attack of the British on Fort McHenry, he, in a measure, associated himself with the glory of his country. He was a man of very ardent religious character, and some of the most poetic and popular of the hymns used in religious worship were from his pen.

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DANIEL WEBSTER was born at Salisbury, New Hampshire, January 18th, 1782; was a Representative from New Hampshire in Congress, 1813–1817, and removing to Boston, a Representative from Massachusetts, 1823–1827; United States Senator, 1827–1841; Secretary of State under Presidents Harrison and Tyler, 1841–1843; United States Senator, 1845–1850; Secretary of State under President Fillmore from 1850 until his death at Marshfield, Massachusetts, October 14th, 1852.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE STAMPING OUT OF NULLIFICATION.

REJECTION OF MARTIN VAN BUREN—THE WAR AGAINST THE UNITED STATES BANK—NICK BIDDLE, OF THE BANK—RE-ELECTION OF GENERAL JACKSON—FINANCIAL DEBATES IN THE SENATE—CALHOUN, OF SOUTH CAROLINA—SECESSION STAMPED OUT—UNION PROCLAMATION—THE EXPUNGING RESOLUTION—A SENATORIAL SCENE—AN APPEAL FROM THE CHAIR.

THE rejection by the Senate of the nomination of Martin Van Buren as Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain, was an act of retributive justice, carried out on the very spot where, five years before, he had formed the combination which overthrew the Administration of John Quincy Adams. John C. Calhoun, who was the organizer of the rejection of Mr. Van Buren, thought that he had obtained pledges of a sufficient number of votes; but just before the ayes and noes were called Mr. Webster left the Senate Chamber, and going down into the Supreme Court room remained there until the vote had been taken. Mr. Calhoun consequently found himself one vote short, and had to give the casting vote, as President of the Senate, which rejected the nomination of his rival, who was already in England, where he had been received with marked attention.

Returning to the United States, Mr. Van Buren was warmly welcomed at the White House as a victim of Mr. Calhoun's opposition to the President, and he was

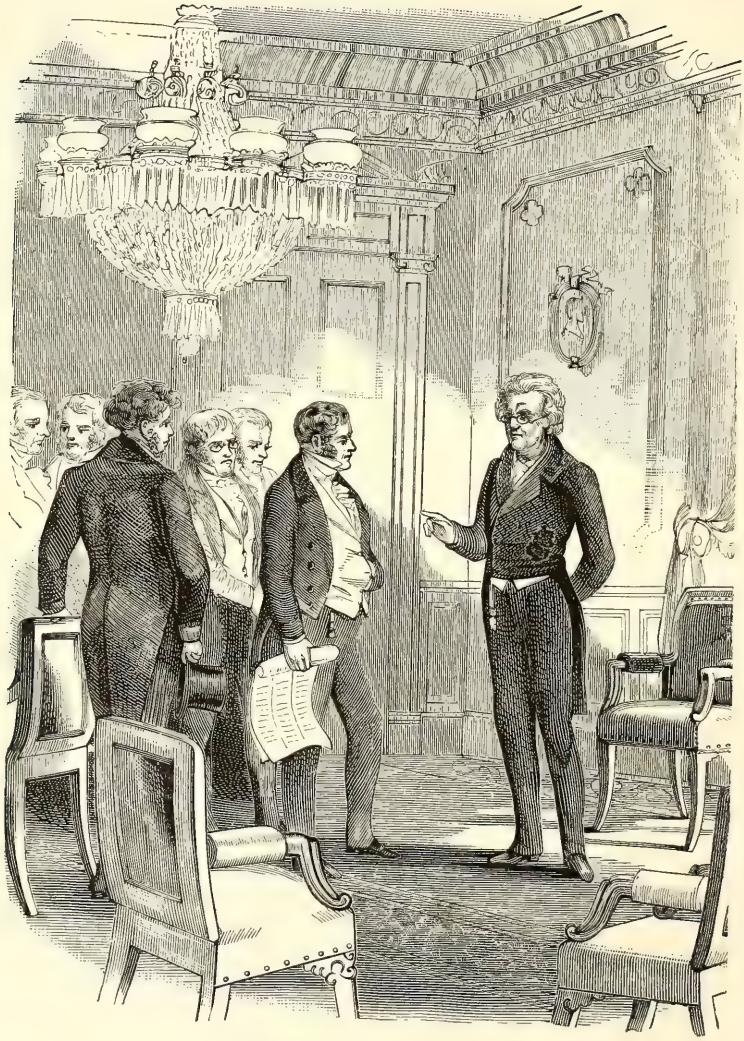
soon recognized by the Democratic party as their heir-apparent to the Presidency. His appearance at that time was impressive. He was short, solidly built, with a bald head, and with bushy side-whiskers, which framed his florid features. He added the grace and polish of aristocratic English society to his natural courtesy, and it was his evident aim never to provoke a controversy, while he used every exertion to win new friends and to retain old ones. After he had been elected Vice-President, he sat day after day in the chair of the Senate, apparently indifferent alike to the keen thrusts of Calhoun, the savage blows of Webster, and the gibes of Clay. He well knew that General Jackson would regard every assault on him as aimed at the Administration, and that his chances for the succession would thereby be strengthened. Charges of political chicanery were brought against him in shapes more varied than those of Proteus and thick as the leaves that strew the vale of Valombrosa; but he invariably extricated himself by artifice and choice management, earning the sobriquet of "the Little Magician." He could not be provoked into a loss of temper, and he would not say a word while in the chair except as connected with his duties as presiding officer, when he spoke in gentle but persuasive tones, singularly effective from the clearness of his enunciation and his well-chosen emphasis.

Mr. Van Buren, who was then a widower, kept house on Pennsylvania Avenue, about half way between the White House and Georgetown, where he not only gave dinner parties to his political friends, but entertained their wives and daughters at evening whist parties. Gentlemen and ladies were alike used for the advancement of his schemes for the succession and for retain-

ing his position in the estimation of General Jackson. On one occasion he said to Mrs. Eaton that he had been reading much and thinking deeply on the characters of great men, and had come to the conclusion that General Jackson was the greatest man that had ever lived—the only man among them all who was without a fault. "But," he added, "don't tell General Jackson what I have said. I would not have him know it for the world." Of course, it was not long before Mrs. Eaton repeated the conversation to General Jackson. "Ah, madam!" said Old Hickory, the tears starting in his eyes, "that man loves me; he tries to conceal it, but there is always some way fixed by which I can tell my friends from my enemies."

Mr. Van Buren was noted for his willingness to sign applications for office, and he used to tell a good story illustrating his readiness to oblige those who solicited his aid. When Governor of the State of New York, a lawyer called on him to get a convict pardoned from the penitentiary, and stated the case, which was a clear one. "Have you the papers?" he asked. "If so, I will sign them." "Here they are," said the lawyer, producing a bulky document, and the Governor indorsed them: "Let pardon be granted. M. Van Buren." He then left for the office of the Secretary of State, but soon returned. "Governor," said he, "I made a mistake, and you indorsed the wrong paper." He had presented for the official indorsement the marriage settlement of an Albany belle about to marry a spendthrift.

To ingratiate himself further with General Jackson, and to strengthen the Democratic party, whose votes he relied upon to elevate him to the Presidency, Mr. Van Buren organized the war against the United States

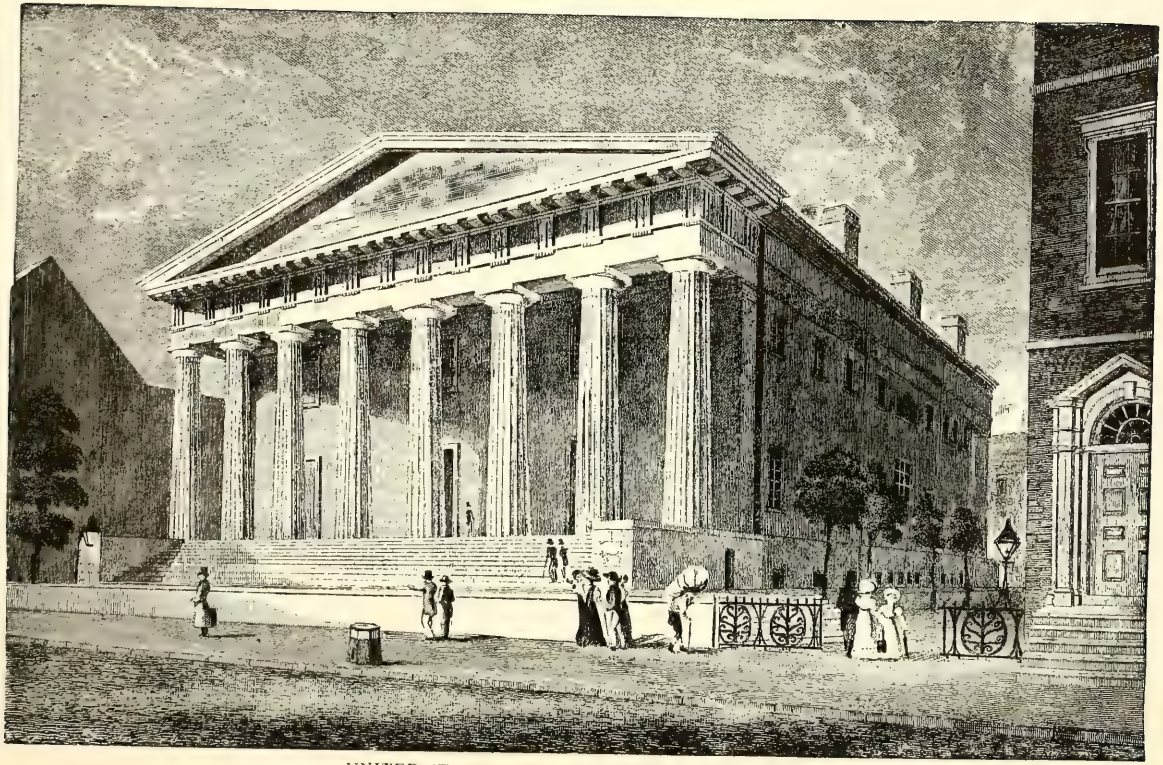


RECEPTION OF DELEGATES.

Bank. General Jackson was opposed to this institution before he became President, and it was not a difficult task to impress upon his mind that the Bank was an

unconstitutional monopoly, which defied the legislative acts of sovereign States, which was suborning the leading newspapers and public men of the country, and which was using every means that wealth, political chicanery, and legal cunning could devise to perpetuate its existence. All this the honest old soldier in time believed, and it was then not difficult to impress him with a desire to combat this "monster," as he called the Bank, and to act as the champion of the people in killing the dragon which was endeavoring to consume their fortunes. When a committee of wealthy business men from Boston, New York, and Philadelphia waited on him with a remonstrance against his financial policy, he gave them such a reception that they felt very uncomfortable and were glad to get away.

The Democratic politicians and presses heartily seconded their chieftain in this war, promising the people "Benton mint-drops instead of rag-money." Jackson clubs were everywhere organized, having opposite to the tavern or hall used as their headquarters a hickory-tree, trimmed of all its foliage except a tuft at the top. Torch-light processions, then organized for the first time, used to march through the streets of the city or village where they belonged, halting in front of the houses of prominent Jackson men to cheer, while before the residences of leading Whigs they would often tarry long enough to give six or nine groans. Editors of newspapers which supported the Administration were forced to advocate its most ultra measures and to denounce its opponents, or they were arraigned as traitors, and if satisfactory excuses could not be made, they were read out of the party. Among those thus excommunicated was Mr. James Gordon Bennett, who had edited the Philadelphia *Pennsylvanian*.



UNITED STATES BANK AT PHILADELPHIA (1834)

Nicholas Biddle, its president, managed the affairs of the Bank of the United States with consummate ability. His trials in the bitter contest waged against him and the institution which he represented were almost as manifold as those that tested the patience of Job; and he bore them with equal meekness so far as temper was concerned, but when duty required he never failed to meet his opponents with decision and effect. The Bank had to discount the worthless notes of a number of Congressmen and editors, whose support, thus purchased, did more harm than good. Mr. Biddle had also incurred the hostility of Isaac Hill and other influential Jackson men because he would not remove the non-partisan presidents and cashiers of the branches of the Bank in their respective localities, and appoint in their places zealous henchmen of the Administration.

General Jackson was triumphantly re-elected in November, 1832, receiving two hundred and nineteen of the two hundred and eighty-eight electoral votes cast, while Martin Van Buren received one hundred and eighty-nine electoral votes for Vice-President. Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware, Maryland, and Kentucky cast forty-nine electoral votes for Henry Clay and John Sergeant. Vermont gave her seven electoral votes for the anti-Masonic candidates, William Wirt and William Ellmaker, while South Carolina bestowed her eleven electoral votes on John Floyd, of Virginia, and Henry Lee, of Massachusetts, neither of whom were nullifiers. Some of the Jackson newspapers, while rejoicing over his re-election, nominated him for a third term, and William Wirt wrote: "My opinion is that he may be President for life if he chooses."

The ordeal of re-election having been passed, Presi-

dent Jackson and his supporters carried out the programme which had before been decided upon. The removal of the Government deposits from the United States Bank gave rise to stormy debates in Congress, and the questionable exercise of Executive authority met with a fierce, unrelenting opposition from the Whigs.

The debates in the Senate on the Bank and attendant financial questions were very interesting, but the audiences were necessarily small. The circumscribed accommodations of the Senate Chamber were insufficient, and while the ladies generally managed to secure seats, either in the galleries or on the floor, the gentlemen had to content themselves with uncomfortable positions, leaning against pillars or peeping through doorways. Mr. Van Buren, as Vice-President, presided with great dignity, and endeavored to conciliate those Senators who were his rivals for the succession, but he had often to hear his political course mercilessly criticised by them.

John C. Calhoun, who resigned the position of Vice-President that he might be elected a Senator from South Carolina, differed from his great contemporaries in the possession of a private character above reproach. Whether this arose from the preponderance of the intellectual over the animal in his nature, or the subjection of his passions by discipline, was never determined by those who knew the gifted South Carolinian best; but such was the fact. His enemies could find no opprobrious appellation for him but "Catiline," instead of "Caldwell," which was his middle name--no crime but ambition. He disregarded the unwritten laws of the Senate, which required Senators to appear in dress suits of black broadcloth, and asserted his

State pride and his State independence by wearing, when the weather was warm, a suit of nankeen, made from nankeen cotton grown in South Carolina. Mr. Calhoun had a pale and attenuated look, as if in bad health; his long black hair was combed up from his forehead and fell over the back of his head, and his thin lips increased the effect of the acute look with which he always regarded those around him. His personal intercourse with friends was characterized by great gentleness of manner; he was an affectionate and a devoted husband and father, and Webster truly remarked of him that "he had no recreations, and never seemed to feel the necessity of amusement."

Disappointed in his aspirations for the Presidency of the United States, Mr. Calhoun conceived the idea of dissolving the Union and establishing a Southern Confederacy, of which he would be the Chief Executive. One of his projects, fearing that the success of the main plot would be too long delayed for any benefit to inure to him, was a proposed amendment to the Constitution, to make two Presidents exist at the same time—one from the South and the other from the other sections—and no act in regard to the interests of the South was to be passed without the consent of the President for that section. Of course, his plan was looked upon as puerile, if not mischievous, and failed to attract much attention. His whole soul was then bent on his main scheme, and he enlisted warm, ardent, and talented followers in behalf of it; still, but little headway was made in it outside of South Carolina.

President Jackson knew well what was going on, and was determined that the law should be put into execution, not against misguided followers, but against Calhoun, the chief conspirator. Calhoun, hearing that

Jackson had resolved on his prosecution and trial, and, if convicted, his execution for treason, sent Letcher, of Kentucky, to confer with him and to learn his real intentions. The President received Letcher with his usual courtesy; but that mild blue eye, which at times would fill with tears like that of a woman, was kindled up that night with unwonted fire. He explained the situation to Letcher, and concluded by telling him that, if another step was taken, "by the Eternal!" he would try Calhoun for treason, and, if convicted, he would hang him on a gallows as high as Haman.

Letcher saw that Jackson was terribly in earnest, and hastened to the lodgings of Calhoun, who had retired, but received him sitting up in bed with his cloak around him. Letcher detailed all that had occurred, giving entire the conversation with Jackson, and described the old hero as he took that oath.

There sat Calhoun, drinking in eagerly every word, and, as Letcher proceeded, he turned pale as death, and, great as he was in intellect, trembled like an aspen leaf, not from fear or cowardice, but from the consciousness of guilt. He was the arch traitor, who, like Satan in Paradise, "brought death into the world and all our woe." Within one week he came into the Senate and voted—voted for every section of Mr. Clay's bill—and President Jackson was prevailed upon not to prosecute him for his crime.

During the last days of General Jackson at the Hermitage, while slowly sinking under the ravages of consumption, he was one day speaking of his Administration, and with glowing interest he inquired of his physician:

"What act in my Administration, in your opinion, will posterity condemn with the greatest severity?"

The physician replied that he was unable to answer, that it might be the removal of the deposits.

"Oh! no," said the General.

"Then it may be the specie circular?"

"Not at all!"

"What is it, then?"

"I can tell you," said Jackson, rising in his bed, his eyes kindling up—"I can tell you; posterity will condemn me more because I was persuaded not to hang John C. Calhoun as a traitor than for any other act in my life."

This was in accord with an earlier answer made by "Old Hickory," before he had so far succumbed to disease and prior to his union with the Presbyterian Church. When his old friend and physician, Dr. Edgar, then asked him, "What would you have done with Calhoun and the other nullifiers, if they had kept on?"

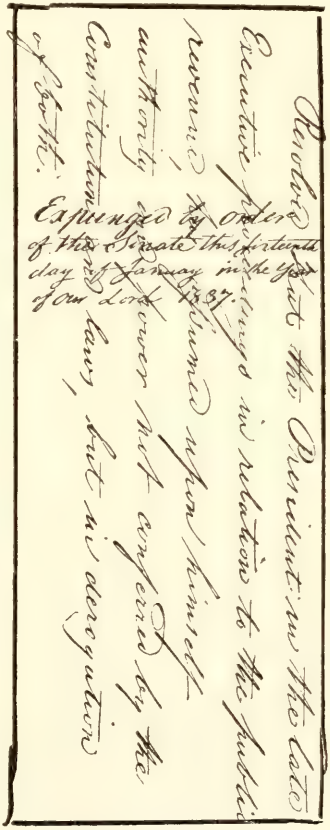
"Hung them, sir, as high as Haman!" was his emphatic reply.

Daniel Webster's reply to Hayne was made the keynote of the resistance by the Administration to Jefferson's assertion which was zealously adopted by Calhoun, "Where powers have been assumed which have not been delegated, nullification is the rightful remedy." President Jackson's famous and telling proclamation against this doctrine of nullification—the germ of secession—was written by Edward Livingston, his Secretary of State, and it has been said that it followed, throughout, the doctrine maintained by Mr. Webster in his reply to Hayne, in 1830. So remarkable was this adoption of Mr. Webster's argument, that popular opinion at that time regarded it as a manifest, but of course a very excusable, plagiarism.

Mr. Webster, when the proclamation was issued, was on his way to Washington, ignorant of what had occurred. At an inn in New Jersey he met a traveler just from Washington. Neither of them was known to the other. Mr. Webster inquired the news. "Sir," said the gentleman, "the President has issued a proclamation against the nullifiers, taken entirely from Mr. Webster's reply to Hayne." In the course of the ensuing session, and not long after Mr. Webster reached the capital it became necessary for the Administration to act. Mr. Webster was in the opposition, and, excepting in regard to the integrity of the Union and the just power of the Government, there was a wide gulf between the Administration and him. He was absent from his seat for several days when the Force bill was about to be introduced as an Administration measure. A portion of General Jackson's original supporters hung back from that issue. At this juncture there was much inquiry among the President's friends in the House as to where Mr. Webster was. At length a member of General Jackson's Cabinet went to Mr. Webster's rooms, told him the nature of the bill about to be introduced, and asked him, as a public duty, to go into the Senate and defend the bill and the President. It is well known to the whole country that Mr. Webster did so; and it is known to me that General Jackson personally thanked him for his powerful aid, that many of the President's best friends afterward sought to make a union between him and Mr. Webster, and that nothing continued to separate them but an irreconcilable difference of opinion about the questions relating to the currency.

While Mr. Calhoun was undoubtedly the leading Democrat in the Senate, after his return to that body,

Mr. Benton was the recognized leader of President Jackson's adherents in that body. His fierce opposition to "Biddle and the Bank," with his prediction that the time would come when there would be no paper money, but when every laboring man would have a knit silk purse, through the meshes of which the gold coin within could be seen, obtained for him the sobriquet of "Old Bullion." His greatest triumph was the passage of a resolution by the Senate "expunging" from its journal a resolution censuring General Jackson for the removal of the deposits from the Bank of the United States. This expunging resolution was kept before the Senate for nearly three years, and was then passed by only five majority. The closing debate was able and exhaustive, Henry Clay, John J. Crittenden, Thomas Ewing, William C. Rives, William Hendricks, John M. Niles, Richard H. Bayard, and others participating, while Daniel Webster read a protest signed by himself and his sturdy colleague, John Davis. The Democrats had provided a bountiful supply of refreshments in the room of the Committee on Finance, and several Senators showed by their actions that they were not mem-

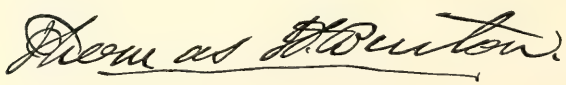


EXPUNGED RESOLUTION.

bers of the then newly organized Congressional Temperance Society, before which Mr. Webster had delivered a brief address. After the final vote—twenty-four yeas and nineteen nays—had been taken, Mr. Benton moved that the Secretary carry into effect the order of the Senate. Then the Secretary, Mr. Asbury Dickens, opening the manuscript journal of 1834, drew broad black lines around the obnoxious resolution and wrote across its face: "Expunged by order of the Senate, this 16th day of January, in the year of our Lord 1837."

No sooner had he concluded than hisses were heard, and Mr. King, of Alabama, who occupied the chair, ordered the galleries to be cleared, while Mr. Benton, in a towering rage, denounced the offenders and demanded their arrest. "Here is one," said he, "just above me, that may easily be identified—the bank ruffian." Mr. King revoked his order to clear the galleries, but directed the arrest of the person pointed out by Mr. Benton, who was soon brought before the bar of the Senate. It was Mr. Lloyd, a practicing lawyer at Cleveland, Ohio, who was not permitted to say a word in his own defense, but was soon discharged, after which the Senate adjourned.

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THOMAS HART BENTON was born near Hillsborough, North Carolina, March 14th, 1782; was United States Senator from Missouri, 1821–1851; a Representative in Congress from Missouri, 1853–1855; was defeated as a candidate for re-election to Congress in 1854, and as candidate for Governor of Missouri in 1856, and died at Washington City, April 10th, 1858.

## CHAPTER X.

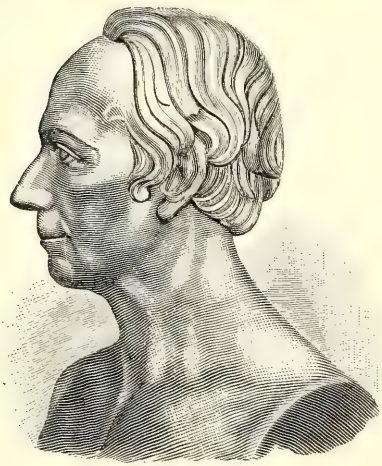
### PROMINENT MEN OF JACKSON'S TIME.

HARRY OF THE WEST—TILT BETWEEN CLAY AND BENTON—REBUKE OF A REVOLUTIONARY HERO—APT ORATORICAL ILLUSTRATION—DANIEL WEBSTER'S WIT—AN EXCITED VISITOR—THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—GENERAL HOUSTON REPRIMANDED—ELI MOORE, OF NEW YORK—CHURCHILL C. CAMBRELING—CROCKETT, OF TENNESSEE—EMBRYO PRESIDENTS—OTHER DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVES—A JACKSON DEMOCRAT.

HENRY CLAY, after his return to the Senate, was the recognized leader of the Whig Senators, for he would recognize no leader. His oratory was persuasive and spirit-stirring. The fire of his bright eyes and the sunny smile which lighted up his countenance added to the attractions of his unequaled voice, which was equally distinct and clear, whether at its highest key or lowest whisper—rich, musical, captivating. His action was the spontaneous offspring of the passing thought. He gesticulated all over. The nodding of his head, hung on a long neck, his arms, hands, fingers, feet, and even his spectacles, his snuff-box, and his pocket-handkerchief, aided him in debate. He stepped forward and backward, and from the right to the left, with effect. Every thought spoke; the whole body had its story to tell, and added to the attractions of his able arguments. But he was not a good listener, and he would often sit, while other Senators were speaking, eating sticks of striped peppermint

candy, and occasionally taking a pinch of snuff from a silver box that he carried, or from one that graced the table of the Senate.

Occasionally, Mr. Clay was very imperious and displayed bad temper in debate. Once he endeavored to browbeat Colonel Benton, bringing up "Old Bullion's" personal rencontre with General Jackson, and charging the former with having said that, should the latter be elected President, Congress must guard itself with pistols and dirks. This Colonel Benton pronounced "an atrocious calumny." "What," retorted Mr. Clay, "can you look me in the face, sir, and say that you never used that language?" "I look," said Colonel Benton, "and repeat that it is an atrocious calumny, and I will pin it to him who repeats it here." Mr. Clay's face flushed with rage as he replied: "Then I declare before the Senate that you said to me the very words!" "False! false! false!" shouted Colonel Benton, and the Senators interfered, Mr. Tazewell, who was in the chair, calling the belligerents to order. After some discussion of the questions of order, Colonel Benton said: "I apologize to the Senate for the manner in which I have spoken —but not to the Senator from Kentucky." Mr. Clay promptly added: "To the Senate I also offer an apology—to the Senator from Missouri, none!" Half



BROWN'S BUST OF CLAY.

an hour afterward they shook hands, as lawyers often do who have just before abused each other in court.

On another occasion, General Smith, of Baltimore, a Revolutionary hero upward of eighty years of age, who had been a member of Congress almost forty years, was one day the object of Henry Clay's wrath. The old General, who had fought gallantly in the Revolutionary struggle and taken up arms again in the War of 1812, was offensively bullied by Mr. Clay, who said: "The honorable gentleman was in favor of manufactures in 1822, but he has turned—I need not use the word—he has abandoned manufactures. Thus

> "'Old politicians chew on wisdom past
> And totter on, in blunders, to the last.'"

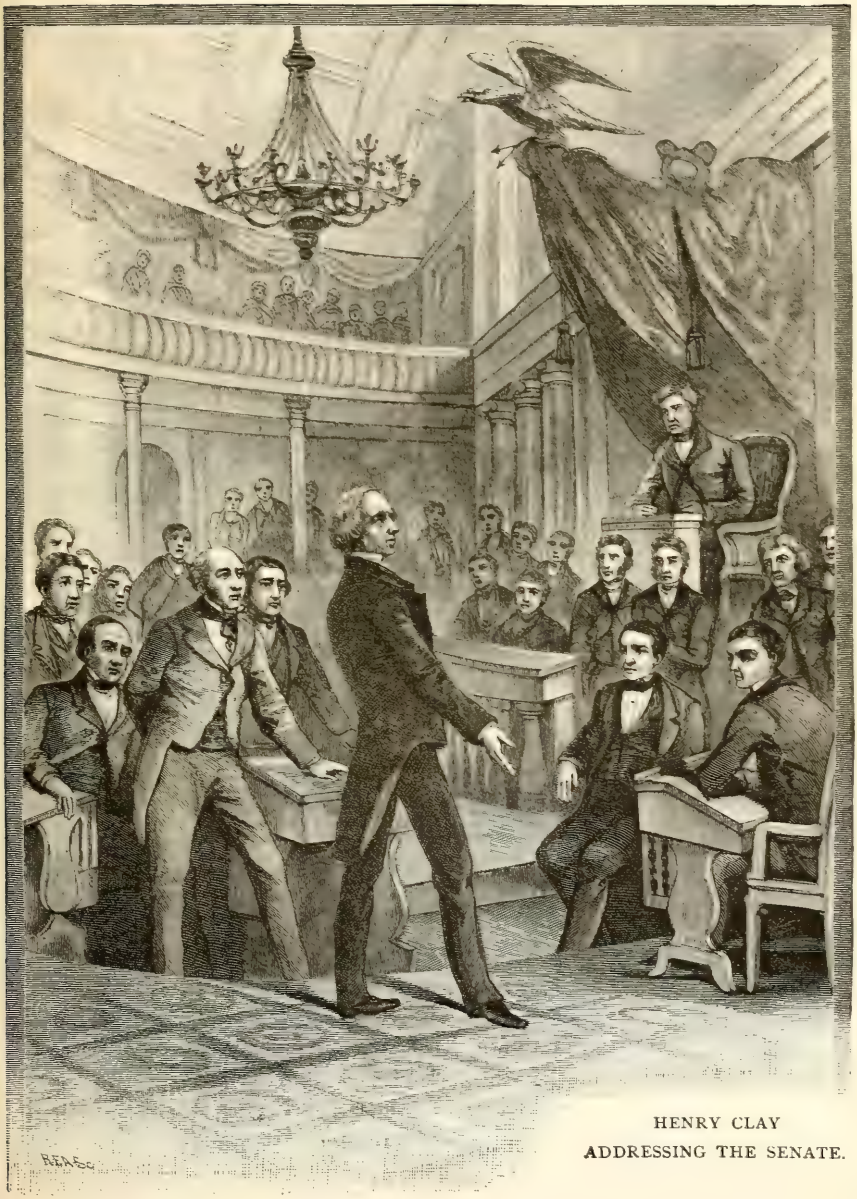
The old General sprang to his feet. "The last allusion," said he, "is unworthy of a gentleman. Totter, sir, I totter! Though some twenty years older than the gentleman, I can yet stand firm, and am yet able to correct his errors. I could take a view of the gentleman's course, which would show how consistent he has been." Mr. Clay exclaimed, angrily: "Take it, sir, take it—I dare you!" Cries of "Order." "No, sir," said Mr. Smith, "I will not take it. I will not so far disregard what is due to the dignity of the Senate."

While Mr. Clay was generally imperious in debate, and not overcautious in his choice of phrases and epithets, he was fond of a joke, and often indulged, in an undertone, in humorous comments on the remarks by other Senators. Sometimes he would be very happy in his illustrations, and make the most of some passing incident. One afternoon, when he was replying to a somewhat heated opponent, a sudden squall

came up and rattled the window curtains so as to produce a considerable noise. The orator stopped short in the midst of his remarks and inquired aloud, what was the matter; and then, as if divining the cause of the disturbance, he said: "Storms seem to be coming in upon us from all sides." The observation, though trivial as related, was highly amusing under the circumstances which gave rise to it and from the manner in which it was uttered.

When Henry Clay returned to the Senate, Daniel Webster yielded to him the leadership of the Whigs in that body, but in no way sacrificed his own independence. "The Great Expounder of the Constitution," as he was called, was then in the prime of life, and had not began those indulgences which afterward exercised such injurious effects upon him. He would also occasionally indulge in a grim witticism. On one occasion, when a Senator who was jeering another for some pedantry said, "The honorable gentleman may proceed to quote from Crabbe's Synonyms, from Walker and Webster"—"Not from Walker and Webster," exclaimed the Senator from Massachusetts, "for the authorities may disagree!" At another time, when he was speaking on the New York Fire bill, the Senate clock suddenly began to strike, and after it had struck continuously for about fourteen or fifteen times, Mr. Webster stopped, and said to the presiding officer, "The clock is out of order, sir—I have the floor." The occupant of the chair looked rebukingly at the refractory time-piece, but, in defiance of the officers and rules of the House, it struck about forty before the Sergeant-at-Arms could stop it, Mr. Webster standing silent, while every one else was laughing.

On another occasion, while Mr. Webster was address-



HENRY CLAY
ADDRESSING THE SENATE.

ing the Senate in presenting a memorial, a clerical-looking person in one of the galleries arose and shouted: "My friends, the country is on the brink of destruction! Be sure that you act on correct principles. I warn you to act as your consciences may approve. God is looking down upon you, and if you act on correct principles you will get safely through." He then deliberately stepped back, and retired from the gallery before the officers of the Senate could reach him. Mr. Webster was, of course, surprised at this extraordinary interruption; but when the shrill voice of the enthusiast had ceased, he coolly resumed his remarks, saying, "As the gentleman in the gallery has concluded, I will proceed."

Mr. Cuthbert, of Georgia, was much provoked, one day, by a scathing denunciation of his State by Mr. Clay for the manner in which she had treated the Cherokee Indians. As the eloquent Kentuckian dwelt more in sorrow than in anger upon the wrongs and outrages perpetrated in Georgia upon the unoffending aborigines within her borders, many of his hearers were affected to tears, and he himself was obviously deeply moved. No sooner did Mr. Clay resume his seat than Mr. Cuthbert sprang to his feet, and in an insolent tone alluded to what he called the theatrical manner of the speaker. "What new part will Roscius next enact?" said the Senator from Georgia, coming forward from his desk and standing in the area of the hall. He was a man of about the ordinary height, with a round face pitted with the smallpox, small, dark eyes, and a full forehead. As he spoke he twirled his watch-key incessantly with his right hand, while his left was flung about in the most unmeaning and awkward gestures. He twisted his body right and left, for-

ward and backward, as if he were a Chinese mandarin going through a stated number of evolutions before his emperor; in fact, he had "all the contortions of the sybil, without her inspiration." To this display Mr. Clay seemed entirely oblivious, but after Judge White, of Tennessee, had discussed the pending question, Mr. Clay rose, saying, that he would reply to this gentleman's remarks as "they alone were worthy of notice."

In the House of Representatives, during the Jackson Administration, sectional topics were rife, sectional jealousies were high, and partisan warfare was unrelenting. Andrew Stevenson, of Virginia, who was triumphantly re-elected as Speaker for four successive terms, understood well how to keep down the boiling caldron, and to exercise stern authority, tempered with dignity and courtesy, over heated passions of the fiercest conflicting character. When he was transferred from the Speaker's chair to the Court of St. James, John Bell, of Tennessee, an old supporter of General Jackson, became his successor for the remainder of that session, but at the commencement of the next Congress Mr. Van Buren secured the election of James K. Polk. Mr. Bell, on his next visit to Nashville, threw down the gauntlet, in an able speech, and nominated Judge White. This was the foundation of the White party, which had, as its editorial henchman, the Rev. Mr. Brownlow, known as "the fighting Parson," who soon acquired a national reputation by his defiant personalities in debate and by his trenchant editorial articles in the newspapers of East Tennessee. Mr. Brownlow was at that time a tall, spare man, with long, black hair, black eyes, and a sallow complexion. He was devoted to the Methodist Church and to the White—afterward the Whig—party, and the denomi-

national doctrine of immersion and the political dogma of emancipation from slavery were objects of his intense hatred.

While Mr. Stevenson was Speaker, General Samuel Houston, who had been residing among the Indians on the Southwestern frontier for several years, came to Washington. Taking offense at some remarks made in debate by Mr. Vance, a representative from Ohio, Houston assaulted and severely pounded him. The House voted that Houston should be brought before its bar and reprimanded by the Speaker, which was done, although Mr. Stevenson's reprimand was really complimentary. That night a friend of General Houston, with a bludgeon and a pistol, attacked Mr. Arnold, of Tennessee, who had been active in securing the reprimand, but the latter soon got the best of the encounter.

The first man elected to Congress as a representative of the rights of the laboring classes was Eli Moore, a New York journeyman printer, who had organized trades unions and successfully engineered several strikes by mechanics against their employers. He was a thin, nervous man, with keen, dark hazel eyes, long black hair brushed back behind his ears, and a strong, clear voice which rang through the hall like the sound of a trumpet. He especially distinguished himself in a reply to General Waddy Thompson, of South Carolina, who had denounced the mechanics of the North as willing tools of the Abolitionists. With impetuous force and in tones tremulous with emotion, he denounced aristocracy and advocated the equality of all men. The House listened with attention, and a Southern politician exclaimed to one of his colleagues, "Why, this is the high-priest of revolution

singing his war song." What added to the effect of this remarkable speech was its dramatic termination. Just as he had entered upon his peroration he grew deathly pale, his eyes closed, his outstretched hands clutched at vacancy, he reeled forward, and fell insensible. His friends rushed to his support, and his wife, who was in the gallery, screamed with terror. His physician positively prohibited his speaking again, and in subsequent years, when the Democratic party was in power, he enjoyed the positions of Indian Agent under Polk, and of Land Agent under Pierce.

Ransom H. Gillet, of the Ogdensburgh district, was one of the old "Jackson Democratic War-Horses." He was a man of commanding presence, a ready speaker, and a famous manipulator of opinion at Conventions.

By birth a North Carolinian, Churchill C. Cambreling was by adoption a New Yorker, and by strict attention to business he had become one of the merchant princes of the commercial metropolis. Thirty years of age, with a commanding presence, a good voice, a ready command of language, and a practical knowledge of financial matters, he made an excellent Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means and leader of the Jackson men in the House.

He carried business habits into Congress, and passed much of his time at his desk, laboriously answering every letter addressed to him by his constituents or others, or carefully examining papers referred to his Committee. But he was always on the alert, and if in debate any political opponent let slip a word derogatory to the Administration, Mr. Cambreling was at once on his feet with a pertinent retort or a skillful explanation. He was noted for his liberality, and neither the district

charities or his needy constituents ever appealed to him in vain.

The Whigs, during the Jackson Administration, made much of David Crockett, of Tennessee, who was a thorn in the sides of the Democrats, and they succeeded in having him defeated for one Congress, but he was successful at the next election. He was a true frontiersman, with a small dash of civilization and a great deal of shrewdness transplated in political life. He was neither grammatical nor graceful, but no rudeness of language can disguise strong sense and shrewdness, and a "demonstration," as Bulwer says, "will force its way through all perversions of grammar." Some one undertook to publish his life, but he promptly denied the authenticity of the work, and had a true memoir of himself written and published. This was a successful literary venture, and he next published a burlesque life of Van Buren, "heir apparent to the Government, and appointed successor of Andrew Jackson," which, in the mixture of truth, error, wit, sense, and nonsense in about equal parts, has certainly the merit



DAVID CROCKETT.

even at this day of being entertaining. Crockett's favorite expression was, "Be sure you're right, then go ahead." When Texas commenced its struggle for independence he went there, and was killed while gallantly fighting at San Antonio. His son, John W. Crockett, served two terms in Congress, was Attorney-General of Tennessee, edited a paper at New Orleans, and died at Memphis in 1852.

Among the other members of the House of Representatives in Jackson's time were several who afterward occupied high positions in the Federal Government. Franklin Pierce, a courteous gentleman, the son of a brave Revolutionary soldier, had been sent from New Hampshire by a large majority, and laid the foundation of personal friendships upon which he afterward entered the White House as President. Millard Fillmore, hale and hearty in personal appearance, represented his home at Buffalo. He soon acquired a reputation for performing his committee work with scrupulous fidelity, and winning the confidence of his colleagues, while advancing on all proper occasions the interests of his constituents, who rejoiced when he became President, after the death of Taylor. James Knox Polk, of Tennessee, a rigid Presbyterian, an uncompromising Democrat, and a zealous Freemason, was another Representative who subsequently became President.

There were several other prominent men in the House: Richard Mentor Johnson, a burly and slightly educated Kentucky Indian-fighter, who enjoyed the reputation of having killed Tecumseh at the battle of the Thames, was elected a few years later on the Van Buren ticket Vice-President of the United States, but was defeated in the Harrison campaign four years

later; and John Bell, a Whig of commanding presence and great practical sagacity, who was afterward Senator and Secretary of War, and who was defeated when he ran on the Presidential ticket of the Constitutional Union party, in 1860. Elisha Whittlesey, of Ohio, who after sixteen years of Congressional service became an auditor, and was known as "the Watch Dog of the Treasury." Tom Corwin, of the same State, with a portly figure swarthy complexion, and wonderful facial expression, and an inexhaustible flow of wit, who was not a buffoon, but a gentleman whose humor was natural, racy, and chaste. Gulian C. Verplanck and Thomas J. Oakley, two members of the New York bar, who represented that city, were statesmen rather than politicians. John Chambers, of Kentucky, a gigantic economist, was ever ready to reform small expenditures and willing to overlook large ones. And then there was the ponderous Dixon H. Lewis, of Alabama, the largest man who ever occupied a seat in Congress—so large that chairs had to be made expressly for his use.



GEN. FINDLAY'S LAND SALE.

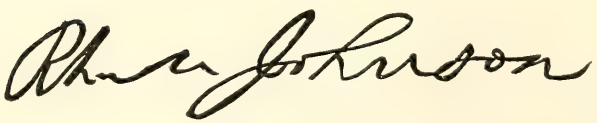
General James Findlay, who had served creditably in the War of 1812, was a Jackson Democratic Representative in the days of the contest between "Old Hickory"

and "Biddle's Bank." He was a type of a gentleman of the old school, and he recalled Washington Irving's picture of the master of Bracebridge Hall. The bluff and hearty manner, the corpulent person, and the open countenance of the General, his dress of the aristocratic blue and buff, and his gold-headed cane, all tallied with the descriptions of the English country gentleman of the olden time. He was greatly beloved in Ohio, and several anecdotes are told of his kindness in enforcing the claims of the United States, when he was Receiver of the District Land Office, for lands sold on credit, as was the custom in those days. Upon one occasion there had been a time of general tightness in money matters, and many farms in the region northeast of Cincinnati but partly paid for were forfeited to the Government. In the discharge of his official duty General Findlay attended at the place of sale. He learned, soon after his arrival there, that many speculators were present prepared to purchase these lands. Mounting a stump, he opened the sale. He designated the lands forfeited, and said that he was there to offer them to the highest bidder. He said that the original purchasers were honest men, but that in consequence of the hard times they had failed to meet their engagements. It was hard, thus to be forced from their homes already partly paid for. But the law was imperative, and the lands must be offered. "And now," continued he, "I trust that there is no gentleman—no, I will not say that, I hope there is no rascal—here so mean as to buy his neighbor's home over his head. Gentlemen, I offer this lot for sale. Who bids?" There was no forfeited land sold that day.

A spirited bronze statue of Jefferson, by his admirer, the French sculptor, David d'Angers, was presented to

Congress by Lieutenant Uriah P. Levy, but Congress declined to accept it, and denied it a position in the Capitol. It was then reverentially taken in charge by two naturalized Irish citizens, stanch Democrats, and placed on a small pedestal in front of the White House. One of these worshipers of Jefferson was the public gardener, Jemmy Maher, the other was John Foy, keeper of the restaurant in the basement of the Capitol, and famous for his witty sayings. Prominent among his *bon mots* was an encomium on Representative Dawson, of Louisiana, who was noted for his intemperate habits, the elaborate ruffles of his shirts, and his pompous strut. "He came into me place," said Foy, "and after ateing a few oysters he flung down a Spanish dollar, saying, 'Niver mind the change, Mr. Foy; kape it for yourself.' Ah! there's a paycock of a gintleman for you."

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RICHARD MENTOR JOHNSON was born at Bryant's Station, Kentucky, October 17th, 1781; distinguished himself in the second war with Great Britain, and in the Indian wars; was a Representative in Congress from Kentucky, 1807–1813; was a United States Senator, 1820–1829; was again a Representative, 1829–1837; was Vice-President, 1837–1841; died at Frankfort, November 19th, 1850.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SOCIETY IN JACKSON'S TIME.

THE VAN NESS MANSION—A BENEFACTRESS—A POPULAR CITIZEN—A MUCH-TALKED-OF LAWSUIT—A RUNAWAY NUN—GENERAL JACKSON'S DIPLOMACY—WASHINGTON SOCIETY—ANECDOTES TOLD BY MR. CLAY—MAELZEL'S AUTOMATA—CONDEMNED LITERATURE.

THE most elegant estate in Washington in Jackson's time was the Van Ness mansion, built on the bank of the Potomac, at the foot of Seventeenth Street. Mr. John Van Ness, when a member of the House from the State of New York, had married Marcia, the only child of David Burns, one of the original proprietors of the land on which the Federal City was located. At that time every able-bodied man between eighteen and forty-five (with a few exceptions) had to perform militia duty, and the District Volunteers, organizing themselves in a battalion, complimented Mr. Van Ness by electing him Major. The President commissioned him, but so strict were the Congressmen of those days that the House investigated his case, and declared that he had forfeited his seat as a Representative by accepting a commission from the General Government. For the empty honor of wearing a militia uniform three or four times a year, and paying a large share of the music assessments, Major Van Ness lost his seat in Congress.

Marcia Burns was a lively, beautiful girl, with an engaging frankness in her manner. She was well educated, and while her father was commonly known as "Crusty Davie," she possessed over him an influence that could sway him almost invariably. As the sole inheritor of the Burns estate she was looked upon as a most desirable matrimonial prize, and she was diligently sought after by multitudes of suitors, but the choice of her heart was the brilliant young Congressman with whom she linked her fate, and who was in all respects worthy of so noble a companion.

David Burns died soon after his daughter's marriage, and she dutifully conveyed to her husband, through the intervention of a trustee, her paternal inheritance. With a portion of the fortune thus acquired, Major Van Ness built near the old Burns cottage a villa which cost thirty thousand dollars, and was a palace fit for a king. Entertainments the most costly were inaugurated and maintained in it; wit and song were heard within it, and elegance and distinction assembled under its hospitable shelter. From its door-step one could see ships from Europe moored to the docks of Alexandria, while gliding by were merchantmen from the West Indies, laden for the port of Georgetown.

Major Van Ness and Marcia Burns lived very happily together and had one child, a daughter, who grew into womanhood, married, and died a year after her marriage, ere the flowers in her bridal wreath had faded. Mrs. Van Ness loved her daughter with a love that was idolatry, and with her death she received a blow from which she never recovered. She abandoned all the gayeties of the world, and laid aside her sceptre and crown as queen of society. In the charity school and orphan-asylum, by the bedside of the sick and dying,

and in the homes of poverty, relieving its wants, she was found to the day of her death. Her last words to her grief-stricken husband and friends assembled about her bedside were: "Heaven bless and protect you; never mind me." The Mayor and City Government passed appropriate resolutions, and attended her funeral

Major Van Ness erected a mausoleum after the pat-



THE VAN NESS MAUSOLEUM.

tern of the Temple of Vesta, at a cost of thirty-four thousand dollars, and placed within it his wife's remains and those of her father and mother. The stately pile stood in a large inclosure for years on H Street, beside the orphan asylum which Mrs. Van Ness richly endowed. Finally the march of improvement, needing all the space available within the city limits, necessitated the removal of the mausoleum to Oak Hill Cemetery, in

Georgetown, where the remains of John Howard Payne were subsequently re-interred.

Major Van Ness himself enjoyed everything that worldly preferment could bestow. By turns he was president of a bank and Mayor of Washington, yet with his ample fortune he was always short of ready money. He was never pressed by suit, however, for his good nature was as irresistible as the man was fascinating; the dun who came with a bill and a frown went away with a smile and—his bill. He lived to be seventy-six years of age, when—like the patriarchs of old—he died, full of honor and greatness, and, leaving no direct issue, his property passed into the hands of collateral heirs. They were sensible heirs, who did not seek the intervention of courts and lawyers for a distribution of their interests, but wisely and amicably distributed them themselves. The law, however, was determined not to be entirely shunned. If the heirs would not go to law, the law was accommodating—it would come to them, and it came with a romance.

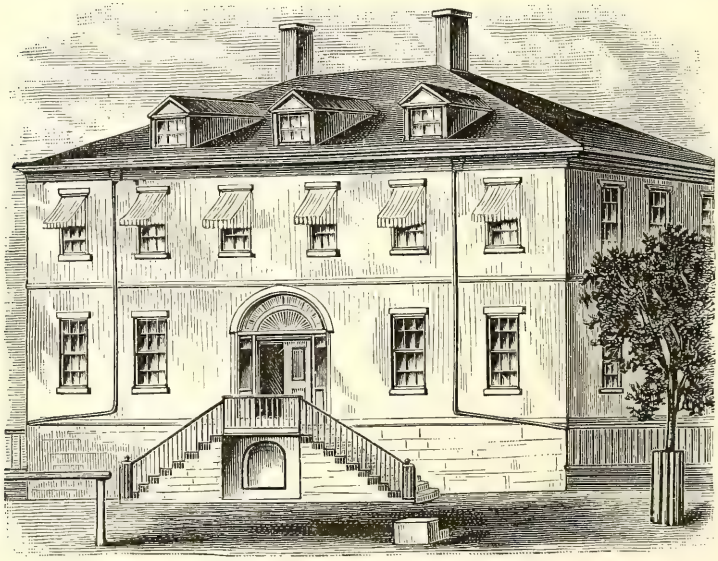
One day, soon after the death of Major Van Ness, a buxom, matronly looking dame, in heavy mourning and with tear-dimmed eyes, came upon the scene and claimed a share of the estate. They naturally inquired her name and address, and she modestly, but firmly, told them she was the widow of the deceased by virtue of a clandestine marriage which had occurred in Philadelphia. The heirs mistook her modesty for an attempt at blackmail, and acted as defendants in the suit which she instituted. The trial is one of the celebrated cases of the District of Columbia. It lasted upward of a month. Eminent counsel were in it, and many witnesses came to prove the truth of opposite facts. There was no doubt that Van Ness had known the widow and had visited her,

for love letters were read in court from him to her; there was no doubt that some ceremony, sanctioned by a minister's presence, had been performed and assisted at by both together, but the requisite formalities to constitute a valid marriage were not fully proven, and the jury disagreed. The matronly dame in heavy mourning did not murmur: luck was against her, and she accepted her luck. She left Washington and never pressed her suit to a second trial, nor further harassed the heirs.

Miss Ann G. Wright, a cousin of Mrs. Van Ness, created a great sensation in Washington by coming to her house for a home. She was a runaway nun from the Convent of the Visitation in Georgetown, and had been known in the community as Sister Gertrude. No one ever knew rightly the cause of her sudden departure from the convent. Some said it was disappointed ambition in not being appointed superioress; others, that it was a case of love; but she never told, and the ladies of the convent were just as reticent. She became an inmate of the elegant Van Ness mansion and was a noted and brilliant woman in society. It was said that she had written a book, exposing the inner life of the convent, to be published after her death, but I have never heard of its appearance. A few years after she left the convent she accompanied the family of the American Minister to Spain, and resided for some time at Madrid, where she was a great favorite in Court circles.

General Jackson was not cultured or accomplished, but he had a strong, well-balanced mind, and he would go through forests of sophistry and masses of legal opinions straight to the point. Governor Wise, who admired him greatly, used to tell a story illustrative

of the rough bark of Old Hickory's character. During the Administration of President Monroe, General Jackson, in command of some troops, invaded Florida and captured Arbuthnot and Ambrister, two Englishmen, who, it was charged, incited the Indians to depredations. He at once ordered a court-martial and had them hanged, with but little time to prepare for their future place of abode. He was arraigned for the offense before



OLD STATE DEPARTMENT BUILDING.

the Cabinet of Mr. Monroe, and Mr. Adams, the Secretary of State, defended him on the high ground of international law as expounded by Grotius, Vattel, and Puffendorf. Jackson, who had quarreled with Mr. Monroe, was disposed to regard the matter as entirely personal. "Confound Grotius! confound Vattel! confound Puffendorf!" said he; "this is a mere matter between Jim Monroe and me."

Having received a complimentary letter from President Bustamente, of Mexico, General Jackson sent it to the Department of State with this indorsement: "Mr. Van Buren will reply to this letter of General Bustamente with the frankness of a soldier." When this reached Mr. Van Buren he laughed heartily, as he was neither a soldier nor remarkable for frankness, and the clerks could not keep a secret.



GENERAL JAMES MILLER.

Although many old citizens, whose relatives and near friends had been turned out of their pleasant offices by the Jackson Administration, kept quite aloof from the White House, there was no lack of social enjoyments at Washington. Mr. Forsyth, the Secretary of State, gave a series of balls, and there were large parties at the residences of Mr. Dickerson, Secretary of the Navy, Major-General Macomb, General Miller, and other prominent men, each one in numbers and guests almost a repetition of the other. Mr. Van Buren was at all of them, shaking hands with everybody, glad to

see everybody, asking about everybody's friends, and trusting that everybody was well. Colonel Richard M. Johnson was also to be seen at all public gatherings, looking, in his scarlet waistcoat and ill-fitting coat, not as the killer of Tecumseh, but as the veritable Tecumseh himself. Mr. Webster was seldom seen at public parties, but Messrs. Clay and Calhoun were generally present, with the foreign Ministers and their suites, who were the only wearers of mustaches in those days. There were the magnates of the Senate and the House, each one great in his own estimation, with the *chevaliers d'industrie*, who lived as by their wits, upon long credits and new debts, and there were strangers congregated from all sections of the country, some having business before Congress, and others having come to see how the country was governed. Every one, on his arrival, would take a carriage and leave cards for the heads of departments, foreign Ministers, leading army and navy officers, and prominent members of Congress. This would bring in return the cards of these magnates and invitations to their next party.

Mr. Clay was a good *raconteur*, and always had a story to illustrate his opinions advanced in conversation. One day, when he had been complimented on his neat, precise handwriting, always free from blots, interlineations, and erasures, he spoke about the importance of writing legibly, and told an amusing story about a Cincinnati grocery-man, who, finding the market short of cranberries, and under the impression that the fruit could be purchased cheaply at a little town in Kentucky, wrote to a customer there acquainting him with the fact and requesting him to send "one hundred bushels per Simmons" (the wagoner usually

sent). The correspondent, a plain, uneducated man, had considerable difficulty in deciphering the fashionable scrawl common with merchants' clerks of late years, and the most important word, "cranberries," he failed to make out, but he did plainly and clearly read—one hundred bushels persimmons. As the article was growing all around him, all the boys in the neighborhood were set to gathering it, and the wagoner made his appearance in due time in Cincinnati with eighty bushels, all that the wagon body would hold, and a line from the country merchant that the remainder would follow the next trip. An explanation soon ensued, but the customer insisted that the Cincinnati house should have written *by* Simmons and not *per* Simmons. Who paid the loss history doth not record.

One more of Mr. Clay's stories which he used to tell with dramatic effect: As he was coming here one November the stage stopped for the passengers to get supper at a little town on the mountain side, where there had been a militia muster that afternoon. When the stage was ready to start, the Colonel, in full regimentals, but somewhat inebriated, insisted on riding with the driver, thinking, doubtless, that the fresh air would restore him. It was not long, though, before he fell off in the mud. The coach stopped, of course, for the Colonel to regain his seat. He soon gathered up, when the following colloquy ensued: "Well, driver (hic), we've had quite a turn (hic) over, haint we?" "No, we have not turned over at all." "I say (hic) we have." "No, you are mistaken, you only fell off." "I say we (hic) *have;* I'll leave it (hic) to the com- (hic) pany. Haven't we (hic) had a turn (hic) over, gentlemen?" Being assured they had not, "Well,

driver (hic)," said he, "if I'd known that (hic) I wouldn't a got out."

The automaton chess-player and other pieces of mechanism exhibited by Monsieur Maelzel were very popular at Washington. The chess-player was the figure of a Turk of the natural size, sitting behind a chest three feet and a-half in height, to which was attached the wooden seat on which the figure sat. On the top of the chest was an immovable chess-board, upon which the eyes of the figure were fixed. Its right hand and arm were extended on the chest, and its left, somewhat raised, held a pipe. Several doors in the chest and in the body of the figure having been opened, and a candle held within the cavities thus displayed, the doors were closed, the exhibitor wound up the works, placed a cushion under the arm of the figure, and challenged any individual of the company present to play.

In playing, the automaton always made choice of the first move and the white pieces. It also played with the left arm—the inventor, as it was said, not having perceived the mistake till his work was too far advanced to alter it. The hand and fingers opened on touching the piece, which it grasped and conveyed to the proper square. After a move made by its antagonist, the automaton paused for a few moments, as if contemplating the game. On giving check to the king it made a signal with its head. If a false move was made by its antagonist it tapped on the chest impatiently, replaced the piece, and claimed the move for itself as an advantage. If the antagonist delayed any considerable time the automaton tapped smartly on the chest with the right hand. At the close of the game the automaton moved the knight, with its proper

motion, over each of the sixty-three squares of the board in turn, without missing one, and without a single return to the same square.

Although positive proof was wanting, it was generally believed that the movements of the figure were directed by a slender person adroitly concealed behind what was apparently a mass of machinery. This machinery was always exhibited when in a fixed state, but carefully excluded from view when in motion. It was noticed by anxious observers that no variation ever took place in the precise order in which the doors were opened, thus giving the concealed player an opportunity to change his position. In what was apparently the winding up of the machine the key always appeared limited to a certain number of revolutions, however different the number of moves in the preceding game might have been. On one occasion sixty-three moves were executed without winding up, and once it was observed that it was wound up without the intervention of a single move.

Monsieur Maelzel also exhibited an automaton trumpeter, life size, attired in a full British uniform. It was rolled out before the audience and performed several marches and patriotic airs. A miniature rope-dancer performed some curious feats, and small figures, when their hands were shaken, ejaculated the words, "Papa!" and "Mamma!" in a life-like manner. But the crowning glory of Monsieur Maelzel's exhibition was a panorama, scenic and mechanical, of the "Burning of Moscow." The view of the Russian capital, with its domes and minarets, was a real work of art. Then the great bell of the Kremlin began to toll, and the flames could be seen making their way from building to building. A bridge in the foreground was cov-

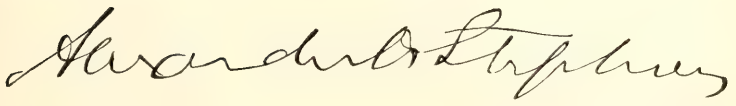
ered with figures, representing the flying citizens escaping with their household treasures. They were followed by a regiment of French infantry, headed by its band, and marching with the precision of veterans. Meanwhile the flames had begun to ascend the spires and domes, and the deep tolling of the bells was echoed by the inspiring strains of martial music. At last, as the last platoon of Frenchmen crossed the bridge, the Kremlin was blown up with a loud explosion, and the curtain fell.



ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Mrs. Alexander Hamilton, the widow of the founder of our financial system, passed a good portion of the latter part of her life at Washington, and finally died there. She was the first to introduce ice-cream at the national metropolis, and she used to relate with rare humor the delight displayed by President Jackson when he first tasted it. He liked it much, and swore, "By the Eternal!" that he would have ices at the White House. The guests at the next reception were agreeably surprised with this delicacy, especially those from the rural districts, who, after approaching it suspiciously, melting each spoonful with their breath before consuming it, expressed their satisfaction by eating all that could be provided. Mrs. Hamilton was

very much troubled by the pamphlet which her husband had published when Secretary of the Treasury, in which he avowed an intrigue with the wife of one of his clerks, to exculpate himself from a charge that he had permitted this clerk to speculate on the action of the Treasury Department. Mrs. Hamilton for some years paid dealers in second-hand books five dollars a copy for every copy of this pamphlet which they brought her. One year the number presented was unusually large, and she accidentally ascertained that a cunning dealer in old books in New York had had the pamphlet reprinted, and was selling her copies at five dollars each which had cost him but about ten cents each. She possessed a good many souvenirs of her illustrious husband, one of which, now in the writer's possession, was the copper camp-kettle which General Hamilton had while serving on the staff of the illustrious Washington.



Alexander Hamilton Stephens was born in Wilkes County, Georgia, February 11th, 1812; was a member of the House of Representatives, December 4th, 1843, to March 3d, 1859; was Vice-President of the Southern Confederacy; was again a member of the United States Congress, October 15th, 1877, to January 1st, 1882; was Governor of Georgia, and died at Crawfordville, Georgia, March 4th, 1883.

## CHAPTER XII.

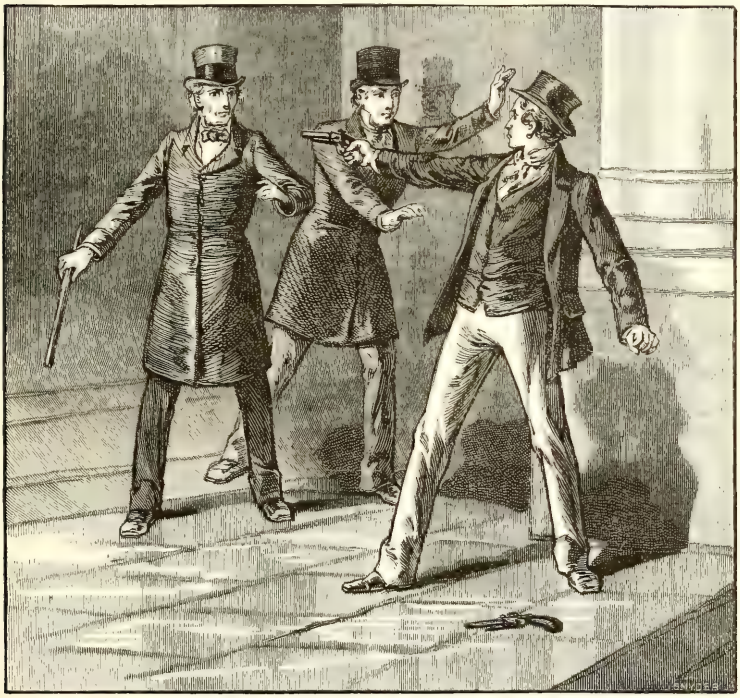
### JACKSON AND HIS ASSOCIATES.

DEMOCRATIC REJOICING—ATTEMPT AT ASSASSINATION—THE POLITICAL GUILLOTINE—THE VICAR OF BRAY—DANIEL WEBSTER'S MEMORY—BAYARD, OF DELAWARE—THE CLAYTONS—PEARCE, OF MARYLAND—THE CLASSICAL AND THE VERNACULAR—BOULANGER'S—LOCATION OF THE NEW TREASURY DEPARTMENT—HACKETT, THE COMEDIAN—A JEALOUS ARTIST—SUMNER'S FIRST VISIT TO WASHINGTON—THE SUPREME COURT AND ITS JUSTICES.

PRESIDENT JACKSON'S friends celebrated the 8th of January, 1835, by giving a grand banquet. It was not only the anniversary of the battle of New Orleans, but on that day the last installment of the national debt had been paid. Colonel Benton presided, and when the cloth was removed he delivered an exulting speech. "The national debt," he exclaimed, "is paid! This month of January, 1835, in the fifty-eighth year of the Republic, Andrew Jackson being President, the national debt is paid! and the apparition, so long unseen on earth—a great nation without a national debt!—stands revealed to the astonished vision of a wondering world! Gentlemen," he concluded, "my heart is in this double celebration, and I offer you a sentiment which, coming direct from my own bosom, will find its response in yours: 'PRESIDENT JACKSON: May the evening of his days be as tranquil and as happy for himself as their meridian

has been resplendent, glorious, and beneficent for his country.' "

A few weeks later, as President Jackson was leaving the Capitol, where he had been to attend the funeral of Representative Davis, of South Carolina, a man advanced toward him from the crowd, leveled a pistol,



ATTEMPTED SHOOTING OF GENERAL JACKSON.

and fired it. The percussion-cap exploded without discharging the pistol, and the man, dropping it, raised a second one, which also missed fire. General Jackson's rage was roused by the explosion of the cap, and, lifting his cane, he rushed toward his assailant, who was knocked down by Lieutenant Gedney, of the Navy, before

Jackson could reach him. The man was an English house-painter named Lawrence, who had been for some months out of work, and who, having heard that the opposition of General Jackson to the United States Bank had paralyzed the industries of the country, had conceived the project of assassinating him. The President himself was not disposed to believe that the plot originated in the crazy brain of Lawrence, whom he regarded as the tool of political opponents. A protracted examination, however, failed to afford the slightest proof of this theory, although General Jackson never doubted it for a moment. He was fortified in this opinion by the receipt of anonymous letters, threatening assassination, all of which he briefly indorsed and sent to Mr. Blair for publication in the *Globe*.

The heads of the executive departments, believing that "to the victors belong the spoils," did not leave an acknowledged anti-Jackson Democrat in office, either in Washington City or elsewhere, with a very few exceptions. One of these was General Miller, Collector of the Port of Salem, Massachusetts. The leading Jackson Democrats in Massachusetts petitioned the President for his removal as incompetent and a political opponent, and they presented the name of a stanch Jackson Democrat for the position. The appointment was made, and the name of the new Collector was sent to the Senate for confirmation. Colonel Benton, who had been made acquainted with the facts, requested that no action be taken until he could converse with the President. Going to the White House the next morning, he said to General Jackson, "Do you know who is the Collector of Customs at Salem, Mr. President, whom you are about to remove?" "No, sir," replied General Jackson; "I can't think of his name, but Nat.

Green and Ben. Hallett have told me that he is an incompetent old New England Hartford Convention Federalist." "Mr. President," said Colonel Benton, "the man you propose to turn out is General Miller, who fought so bravely at the battle of Bridgewater." "What!" exclaimed General Jackson, "not the brave Miller who, when asked if he could take the British battery, exclaimed, 'I'll try.'" "It is the same man, Mr. President," responded Benton. General Jackson rang his bell, and when a servant appeared, said, "Tell Colonel Donelson I want him, quick!" When the private secretary entered, the President said, "Donelson, I want the name of the fellow I nominated for Collector of Salem withdrawn instantly. Then write a letter to General Miller and tell him that he shall be Collector of Salem so long as Andrew Jackson is President."

Learning that some of the Pension Agents had been witholding portions of the pensions due to Revolutionary veterans, General Jackson had the charges thoroughly investigated, and a list of the pensioners printed, showing what each one was entitled to receive. This disclosed the fact that some of the Pension Agents had been continuing to draw the pensions of deceased soldiers for years after their death, besides retaining portions of the pensions of others. Robert Temple, Pension Agent in Vermont, on hearing of the proposed investigation, hastened to Washington, where he endeavored to bribe a clerk to falsify the list made out for the printer. The clerk obtained from him a list of sixty names of deceased soldiers whose pensions he had continued to draw, and gave it to the Secretary of War. Temple, on learning this, committed suicide.

There were a few veteran office-holders at Washington, whose ancestors had been appointed under Fed-

eral rule, but who had managed to veer around into Jackson Democracy. Mr. Webster, in speaking one day of a Philadelphia family which had thus kept in place, said that they reminded him of Simeon Alleyn, Vicar of Bray, in Old England, who steered his bark safely through four conflicting successive reigns. A bland gentleman, he was first a Papist, then a Protestant, next a Papist, and lastly a Protestant again. "He must have been at times," said Mr. Webster, "terribly confused between gowns and robes, and," continued the Senator, "I can fancy him listening at his window to the ballad written on him, as trolled forth by some graceless varlets:

"'To teach my flock I never missed;
Kings were by God appointed,
And they are damned who dare resist
Or touch the Lord's anointed;
And this in law I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whosoever king shall reign,
I'll be the Vicar of Bray, sir.'"

Mr. Webster was not only fond of repeating quotations from the old English poets, but also verses from the old Sternhold and Hopkins hymn-book, which he had studied in the Salisbury meeting-house when a boy, and sometimes when alone he would sing, or rather chant, them in his deep voice, without a particle of melody. His favorite verses were the following translation of the xviiith Psalm:

"The Lord descended from above,
And bow'd the heavens high;
And underneath His feet He cast
The darkness of the sky.

"On cherubs and on cherubims
Full royally He rode,
And on the wings of all the winds
Came flying all abroad."

Late in the Jackson Administration, Richard H. Bayard came to Washington as a Senator from Delaware, to fill a vacancy caused by the resignation of Arnold Naudain. He was the son of James Asheton Bayard, originally a stanch Federalist, who had followed his father-in-law, Richard Bassett, as a Senator from Delaware, and whose vote had made Thomas Jefferson President of the United States instead of Aaron Burr. He had afterward been one of the Commission which negotiated the treaty of Ghent, and he educated his sons to succeed him in the Senate, and in turn to qualify a grandson to represent his State in the upper branch of the National Council. No one family has furnished so many United States Senators, and they have all been inspired by the knightly courtesy of the Bayard of the olden time, who was "without fear and without reproach."

The Democratic Bayards were antagonized in Jackson's time by the Whig Claytons, the other Delaware chair in the United States Senate having been occupied since 1829 by John Middleton Clayton. He was an accomplished lawyer, and one of the leaders of the Whig party. Under his direction Delaware was a Whig State, and had it been a larger one, Mr. Clayton would doubtless have been nominated to the Vice-Presidency, if not to the Presidency. He was zealously devoted to his party, and when, later in life, a delegation waited on him to question some of his acts as not in accordance with Whig principles, he rose, and drawing himself up to his full height, exclaimed: "What! unwhig me? Me, who was a Whig when you gentlemen were riding cornstalk horses in your fathers' barnyards?" The delegation asked his pardon for having doubted his party loyalty, and at once withdrew.

James Alfred Pearce, of Maryland, entered the House of Representatives during the Jackson Administration, and was successively re-elected (with the exception of a single term) until he was transferred to the Senate in 1843, and served in that body until his death in 1862. He was another "wheel horse" of the Whig party, although he shrank from political controversy. His home friends, who were very proud of his reputation, brought him forward at one time as a candidate for the Presidency. But he refused to permit his name to be used, on the ground that the burdens of the White House were too costly a price to pay for its honors.

Mr. Pearce was a devoted friend of the Congressional Library, and during his long service on the Committee having it in charge he selected the books purchased. In doing this he excluded all works calculated in his opinion to engender sectional differences, and when the *Atlantic Monthly* was established he refused to order it for the Library. He was the founder of the Botanic Garden, and the Coast Survey was another object of his especial attention and favor.

Mr. Pearce's care in the choice of books was by no means a notion of his own. From the founding of the Library it was the policy of many of its warmest friends to exclude every publication which would engender and foster sectional differences. They went on the principle of concealing difficulties, rather than of facing them squarely. Very different is the broader policy now maintained in this great library, on whose shelves every copyrighted book of the United States now finds a place.

Mr. Pearce was a type of the gentleman of the old school. Tall, with a commanding figure, expressive

features, blue eyes, and light hair, he was a brilliant conversationalist and a welcome guest at dinner.

Senator William C. Preston, of South Carolina, was not only one of the foremost orators in the Senate, but



THE CONGRESSIONAL LIBRARY.

a delightful conversationalist, with an inexhaustible fund of reminiscence and anecdote. One of his colleagues in the House of Representatives, Mr. Warren R. Davis, of the Pendleton district, was equally famed as

a story-teller, and when they met at a social board they monopolized the conversation, to the delight of the other guests, who listened with attention and with admiration.

One evening—as the story is told—at a dinner-party, over the Madeira and walnuts, which formed the invariable last course in those days, Mr. Preston launched forth in a eulogium on the extraordinary power of condensation, in both thought and expression, which characterized the ancient Greek and Latin languages, beyond anything of the kind in modern tongues. On it he literally "discoursed eloquent music," adorning it with frequent and apt illustration, and among other examples citing the celebrated admonition of the Spartan mother to her warrior son on the eve of battle—"With your shield or upon it!" The whole party were delighted with the rich tones and classic teachings of the gifted colloquist, except his equally gifted competitor for conversational laurels, who, notwithstanding his enforced admiration, sat uneasily under the prolonged disquisition, anxiously waiting for an opportunity to take his place in the picture. At length a titillation seizing the olfactory nerve of Mr. Preston, he paused to take a pinch of snuff, and Mr. Davis immediately filled up the *vacuum*, taking up the line of speech in this wise:

"I have listened," said he, "with equal edification and pleasure to the classic discourse of our friend, sparkling with gems alike of intellect and fancy, but I differ from him *toto cælo*. He may say what he will as to the superior vigor and condensation of thought and speech characteristic of classic Greece and Rome; but, for my part, I think there is nothing equal to our own *vernacular* in these particulars, and I am fortunately able, although from a humble source, to give you a striking and conclusive example and illustration of the fact.

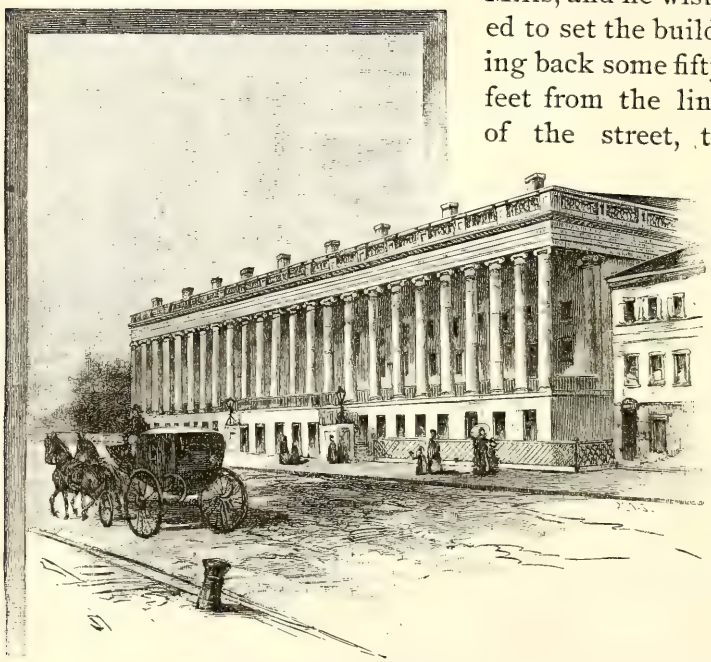
"As I was returning home from Congress, some years since, I approached a river in North Carolina which had been swollen by a recent freshet, and observed a country girl fording it in a merry mood, and carrying a piggin of butter on her head. As I arrived at the river's edge the rustic Naiad emerged from the watery element. 'My girl,' said I, 'how deep's the water and what's the price of butter?' 'Up to your waist and nine pence,' was the prompt and significant response! Let my learned friend beat that if he can, in brevity and force of expression, by aught to be found in all his treasury of classic lore?"

A roar of laughter followed this humorous explosion, and a unanimous vote in favor of the *vernacular* awarded the palm to the distinguished and successful wag over his classical but crest-fallen competitor.

The first restaurant established in Washington was by a Frenchman named Boulanger, who was a pupil of the famous Chevet, of the Palais Royal at Paris. His cozy establishment was on G Street, just west of the War Department, where he used to serve good cheer to General Jackson, Van Buren, Clay, Sir Charles Vaughan, and other notables. His soups were gastronomic triumphs, and he was an adept in serving oysters, terrapin, reed-birds, quails, ortolan, and other delicacies in the first style of culinary perfection. His brandies, of his own importation, were of the choicest "bead and brand," and he obtained from Alexandria some of the choice old Madeira which had been imported before the Revolution in return for cargoes of oak staves. Boulanger did not cherish flattering recollections of General Jackson's taste, but Mr. Van Buren used to compliment his savory repasts and enjoy artistic cheer.

The Treasury Department, which had been destroyed

by fire, was rebuilt on a plan approved by President Jackson. The eastern front, of Virginia sandstone, was a colonnade copied from the Temple of Minerva Pallas, at Athens, three hundred and thirty-six feet long, with thirty Ionic columns. The artist was Robert Mills, and he wished to set the building back some fifty feet from the line of the street, to



TREASURY DEPARTMENT.

give more effect to the architecture, but General Jackson directed him to bring it forward to the building line of the street, and stuck his cane in the ground to show where this was. Of course, he was obeyed.

John Quincy Adams used to occasionally attend the theatre, and he was especially pleased with Hackett as Falstaff. Hackett looked the fat knight well, and his face interpreted many of his remarks and situations

explicitly. He delivered the soliloquy upon honor with fine effect, and the scenes at Gadd's Hill with Bardolph and his nose, with Mrs. Quickly, and with the Prince when detected in his exaggeration, were very humorous and well pointed.

When Mr. Hackett took his benefit it was announced that at the particular request of Colonel David Crockett, of Tennessee, the comedian would appear on the boards in his favorite character of "Nimrod Wildfire," in the play called "The Kentuckian; or, a Trip to New York." This brought out a house full to overflowing. At seven o'clock the Colonel was escorted by the manager through the crowd to a front seat reserved for him. As soon as he was recognized by the audience they made the very house shake with hurrahs for Colonel Crockett, "Go ahead!" "I wish I may be shot!" "Music! let us have Crockett's March!" After some time the curtain rose, and Hackett appeared in hunting costume, bowed to the audience, and then to Colonel Crockett. The compliment was reciprocated by the Colonel, to the no small amusement and gratification of the spectators, and the play then went on.

When Hiram Powers came to Washington, on his way to Italy, he was rather mortified by the remark of a jealous Italian artist, who saw in him a rival: "When you have been ten years in Italy, you may, perhaps, be able to chisel a little;" before, however, a fourth of that time had elapsed, Powers had finished, from the rough marble block, the admirable bust of Chief Justice Marshall which now graces the hall of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Among the visitors at Washington early in 1834 was Charles Sumner, then a tall, slim, ungainly young man, twenty-three years of age, who was a student at

law in Boston, but not admitted to practice. He was introduced by his friend, Mr. Justice Story, to Chief Justice Marshall and Justices Thompson, Duval, and McLean, and was invited to dine with them. It is not known whether Justice Story told him—as he told



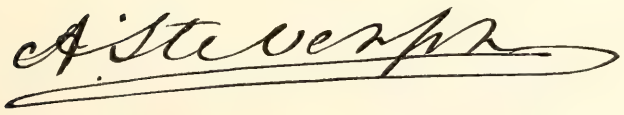
CHARLES SUMNER IN 1834.

Edmund Quincy—that the Court was so æsthetic that they denied themselves wine, except in wet weather. "But," added the commentator on the Constitution, "what I say about wine, sir, gives you our rule, but it does sometimes happen that the Chief Justice will say to me, when the cloth is removed, 'Brother Story, step

to the window and see if it does not look like rain.' If I tell him that the sun is shining, Judge Marshall will reply: 'All the better, for our jurisdiction extends over so large a territory that the doctrine of chances makes it certain that it must be raining somewhere, and it will be safe to take something.'"

Mr. Sumner used to attend the sittings of the Supreme Court, which were commenced at eleven and generally lasted until half-past three. The Senate and House of Representatives met at noon and continued in session until four and sometimes five o'clock. The Senate generally adjourned over from Thursday until Monday, and the House rarely sat on Saturday.

Among those with whom young Sumner became acquainted at Washington was Dr. Francis Lieber, a well-educated German, who had fought at Waterloo. He was for more than twenty years a professor in the University of South Carolina, vouched for as "sound on the slavery question," but he afterward became a bitter opponent of the South and of its "peculiar institution." He was a prolific contributor to the press, and he never hesitated about enlisting the services of friends and acquaintances when they could procure materials for his use.



ANDREW STEVENSON was born in Culpepper County, Virginia, in 1784; was a Representative from Virginia in Congress, 1823–1834; was Minister to Great Britain, 1836–1841; died in Albemarle County, Virginia, January 25th, 1857.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### JACKSON'S LAST YEAR IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

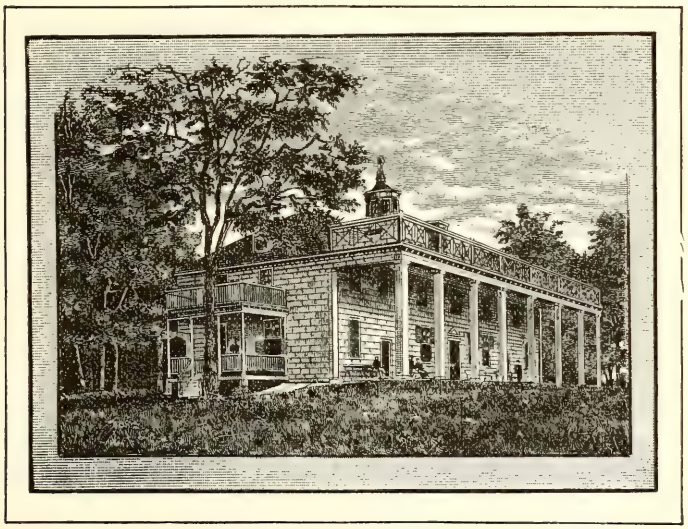
VAN BUREN AS VICE-PRESIDENT—HENRY CLAY DEFIANT AS THE CHAMPION OF THE BANK—WASHINGTON'S CENTENNIAL BIRTHDAY—REMOVAL OF HIS REMAINS—THE DECAPITATION OF GENERAL JACKSON—A PLUCKY CAPE COD MARINER—THE PRESIDENT AT THE RACE-TRACK—AN OLD-TIME COCK FIGHT—WEDDING OF ROBERT E. LEE AT ARLINGTON—THE PUBLIC GARDENER—MISS FANNY KEMBLE—CHEESE RECEPTION AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

MR. VAN BUREN, like his predecessor, Mr. Calhoun, suffered mental martyrdom while presiding over the Senate as Vice-President. His manner was bland, as he thumped with his mallet when the galleries were out of order, or declared that "The ayes have it," or, "The memorial is referred." He received his fusillade of snubs and sneers as the ghost of Creusa received the embraces of Æneas—he heeded them not. He leaned back his head, threw one leg upon the other, and sat as if he were a pleasant sculptured image, destined for that niche of his life.

Henry Clay, then in his prime, was the champion of the United States Bank in the Senate. One day in debate he broke out in the most violent appeal to Martin Van Buren, then presiding in the Senate, to go to the President and represent to him the actual condition of the country. "Tell him," said Clay, "that in a single city more than sixty bankruptcies, involving a loss of upward of fifteen millions of dollars, have

occurred. Tell him of the alarming decline in the value of all property. Tell him of the tears of helpless widows, no longer able to earn their bread, and of unclad and unfed orphans who have been driven by his policy out of the busy pursuits in which but yesterday they were gaining an honest livelihood."

The centennial birthday of George Washington was duly honored in the city which he had founded and



MOUNT VERNON.

which bore his name. Divine services were performed at the Capitol, and there was a dinner at Brown's Hotel, at which Daniel Webster prefaced the first toast in honor of the Father of his Country by an eloquent speech of an hour in length. In the evening there were two public balls—"one for the gentry at Carusi's saloon, and the other for mechanics and tradesmen at the Masonic Temple."

Congress had proposed to pay signal homage to the

memory of Washington on the centennial anniversary of his birth by removing his remains to the crypt beneath the dome of the Capitol. Mr. Custis, the grandson of Mrs. Washington, had given his assent; but John A. Washington, then the owner of Mount Vernon, declined to permit the removal of the remains.

Congress purchased Rembrandt Peale's portrait of Washington, and the House ordered a full length picture of him from Vanderlyn, a celebrated New York artist. A commission was also given to Horatio Greenough for a colossal statue of Washington in a sitting posture, to be placed on a high pedestal in the centre of the rotunda of the Capitol. The Washington National Monument Association, after consultation with men of acknowledged artistic taste, selected from among the numerous designs submitted a simple obelisk, five hundred feet in height, for the erection of which the American people began at once to contribute.

When "the solid men of Boston" ascertained that General Jackson had actually signed the order for the removal of the deposits from the Bank of the United States while enjoying their hospitalities they were very angry. Not long afterward they learned that the United States frigate Constitution, a Boston-built vessel, which was being repaired at the Charlestown Navy Yard, was to be ornamented with a full-length figure of General Jackson as a figure-head. This was regarded as an insult, and the carver who was at work on the figure was requested to stop working on it. This he declined to do, and had his half-carved block of wood taken to the Navy Yard, where he completed his task under the protection of a guard of marines. When the figure-head was completed it was securely bolted to the cutwater of the Constitution, which was

then hauled out to her anchorage, and a vessel was stationed on either side of her.

The Bostonians grew more and more indignant, and finally a daring young mariner from Cape Cod, Captain Samuel Dewey, determined that he would decapitate the obnoxious image. The night which he selected was eminently propitious, as a severe rain storm raged, accompanied by heavy thunder and sharp lightning. Dewey sculled his boat with a muffled oar to the bow of the frigate, where he made it fast, and climbed up, protected by the head boards, only placed on the vessel the previous day. Then, with a finely tempered saw, he cut off the head, and returned with it to Boston, where a party of his friends were anxiously waiting for him at Gallagher's Hotel. He was at once made a lion of by the Whigs, and Commodore Elliott was almost frantic with rage over the insult thus offered to his chief.



COMMODORE J. D. ELLIOTT.

Dewey soon afterward went to Washington, where he exhibited the grim features of the head to several

leading Whigs, and finally carried it, tied up in a bandana handkerchief, to the Navy Department. Sending in his card to Mr. Mahlon Dickerson, then the Secretary of the Navy, he obtained an audience. He was a short, chunky sailor-man, with resolute blue-gray eyes, which twinkled as he said, "Have I the honor of addressing the Secretary of the Navy?"

"You have," replied Mr. Dickerson, "and, as I am very busy, I will thank you to be brief."



THE HEAD RESTORED.

"Mr. Dickerson," said the Captain, "I am the man who removed the figure-head from the Constitution, and I have brought it here to restore it."

Secretary Dickerson threw himself back in his chair and looked with astonishment at the man who had cast such an indignity on the Administration.

"Well, sir," said he, in an angry tone, "you are the man who had the audacity to disfigure Old Ironsides?"

"Yes, sir, I took the responsibility."

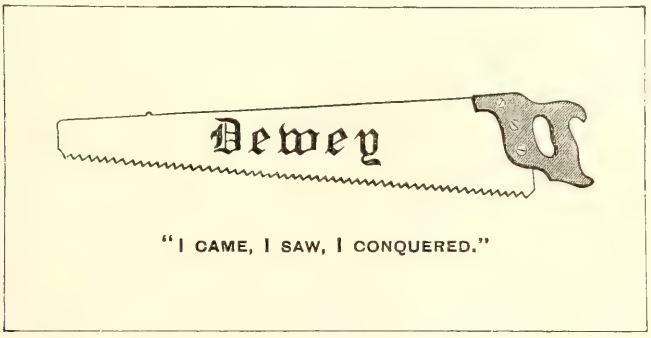
"Well, sir, I will have you arrested immediately," and the Secretary reached toward his bell to summon his messenger.

"Stop, Mr. Secretary," said Captain Dewey; "you, as a lawyer, know that there is no statute against defacing a ship-of-war, and all you can do is to sue me

for trespass, and that in the county where the offense was committed. If you desire it, I will go back to Middlesex County, Massachusetts, and stand my trial."

Mr. Dickerson reflected a moment and said: "You are right; and now tell me how you took away the head."

Dewey told his story, and the story goes that Secretary Dickerson asked him to wait while he stepped over to the White House, followed by a messenger carrying the head. When General Jackson saw it, and




CAPTAIN DEWEY'S CARD.

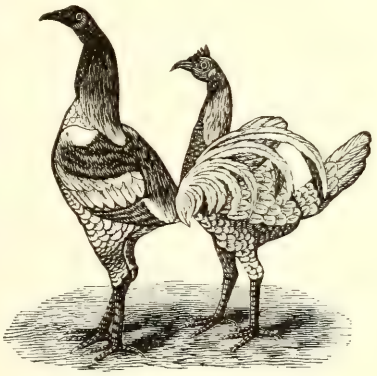
heard the Secretary's story, he burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter. "Why, that," he cried at length —"why, that is the most infernal graven image I ever saw. The fellow did perfectly right. You've got him, you say; well, give him a kick and my compliments, and tell him to saw it off again." Dewey was after this frequently at Washington, and he finally obtained the appointment of Postmaster in a small Virginia town. He used to have on his visiting cards the representation of a handsaw, under which was inscribed, "I came, I saw, I conquered."

General Jackson always liked the physical excitement of a horse-race, where a large assemblage thrills with but one thought from the word "Go!" until the winning horse reaches the goal, and he was always to be seen at the races over the National Course, just north of Washington City. Delegations of sporting men from the Atlantic cities crowded into the metropolis during the race weeks; there were jockey-club dinners and jockey-club balls; and the course resounded to the footfalls of noted horses, especially Boston, Sir Charles, Emily, and Blue Dick. In 1836 General Jackson had a filly of his own raising brought from the Hermitage and entered for a race by Major Donelson, his private secretary. Nor did he conceal his chagrin when the filly was beaten by an imported Irish colt named Langford, owned by Captain Stockton, of the navy, and he had to pay lost wagers amounting to nearly a thousand dollars, while Mr. Van Buren and other devoted adherents who had bet on the filly were also losers.

Baillie Peyton, of Tennessee, used to narrate an amusing account of a visit which he made to the National Race Course with General Jackson and a few others to witness the training of some horses for an approaching race. They went on horseback, General Jackson riding his favorite gray horse, and wearing his high white fur hat with a broad band of black crape, which towered above the whole group. The General greatly enjoyed the trials of speed, until a horse named Busiris began to rear and plunge. This stirred Old Hickory's mettle, and he rode forward to give some energetic advice to the jockey, but just then he saw that the Vice-President was ambling along at his side on an easy-going nag. "Mr. Van Buren," he ex-

claimed, "get behind me, sir! They will run over you, sir!" and the Little Magician, with his characteristic diplomacy, which never gave offense, gracefully retired to the rear of his chief, which, Mr. Peyton used to say, was his place.

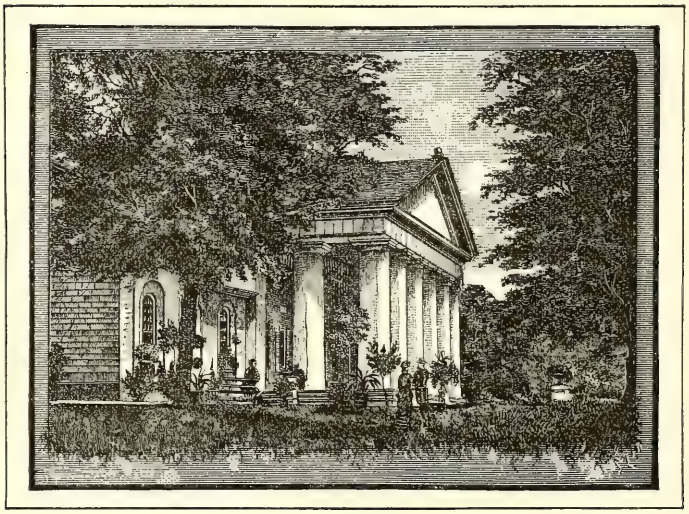
President Jackson used to visit his stable every morning, until he became feeble, and he paid especial attention to the manner in which his horses were shod. He never, after he became President, played cards or billiards, nor did he read anything except the *Daily Globe* and his private correspondence. When he received a letter that he desired one of his Cabinet to read, he would indorse on the back "*Sec. of* —, A. J." He used to smoke a great deal, using either a new clay pipe with a long stem, or a pipe made from a piece of a corn-cob, with a reed stem.



THE HERMITAGE BIRDS.

Cock-fighting had been one of General Jackson's favorite home amusements, and he had become the possessor of a breed of fowl that was invincible in Tennessee. He had some of these pugnacious birds brought to Washington, and one spring morning he rode out toward Bladensburg, with a select party of friends, to see "a main" fought between the Hermitage and the Annapolis cocks. The birds were not only trained to fight, but were equipped for their bloody work. Their heads and necks were plucked, their tail feathers were closely trimmed, and their natural spurs

were cut off and replaced by "gaffs," or sharp blades of finely tempered steel. Each bird had his trainer, ready to administer stimulants and to sponge the blood from the wounds inflicted by the gaffs. General Jackson was very confident that his favorites would again be victorious, but there was no fight, to the great disappointment of all present, who doubtless possessed what has been called "the devil's nerve," which thrills



ARLINGTON.

with base enjoyment in the visible pain of man, beast, or bird. The long confinement in coops on the stages, or some other unknown cause, appeared to have deprived the Hermitage birds of their wonted pluck, and the Annapolis cocks crowed in triumph.

There was a grand wedding at Arlington in Jackson's time, when Lieutenant Robert Edward Lee, fresh from West Point, came up from Fortress Monroe to marry the heiress of the estate, Mary Custis. Old

Mr. Custis was delighted with his soldier son-in-law, whose father had said of Washington that he was "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." The Marshalls, the Carters, the Fitzhughs, the Tayloes, and other "first families of Virginia" were represented at the wedding, and the happy young couple went, after the ceremony, to old Fortress Monroe, where they resided for a while in a casemate fitted up as officers' quarters. The next year Lieutenant Lee brought his bride back to Arlington, which was their happy home until he was persuaded to enlist under the "stars and bars" of the Southern Confederacy.



LIEUTENANT ROBERT E. LEE.

One of General Jackson's favorites was Jemmy Maher, an Irishman, whom he had appointed public gardener, a position of some responsibility in those days, when its holder had to look after the gardens at the White House, the Capitol, and the Departments. Jemmy's father had been forced to flee to this country to avoid punishment for participation in the Irish rebellion of '98, and the son regarded all Englishmen as his foes. General Jackson, who had "whipped the British" at New Orleans, was the object of his especial

adoration, especially as he used to forgive him when the Superintendent of Public Buildings occasionally complained that he drank whisky rather too freely. "Shure, Mr. President," he would say, "I niver drink unless I am dry, and it would be mane in me not to invite me frinds to jine and take a drap with me."



MISS FANNY KEMBLE.

General Jackson was not fond of the theatre, but he went to see the widely heralded performance of Miss Fanny Kemble. The niece of Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble, and the daughter of Charles Kemble, she had been trained from early childhood to sustain the reputation of her distinguished theatrical family. A good-looking young woman, with large, dark eyes, a profusion of dark hair, a low forehead, and healthy strawberry-and-cream complexion, she was personally attractive, and wonderfully effective. Every movement, gesture, and inflection of voice had been carefully studied, and when making an ordinary remark in conversation she would deliver her words with a deliberate attempt at stage effect. Her Juliet, with her father's Romeo, was her best character, but they failed signally as Lady Teazle and Charles Surface in the *School for Scandal.*

Miss Kemble did not remain long on the American stage, as she became the wife of Mr. Pierce Butler, a wealthy slave-owner, in 1834. The next year her *Journal* appeared, in which she criticised what she had seen and heard with a free hand, but "'twas pretty Fanny's way," and no one got angry over her silly twaddle. One of the fair author's predictions concerning the fate of our polity yet awaits fulfillment. "It is my conviction," said she, "that America will be a monarchy before I am a skeleton." Fifty years have passed since these words were written, and the prophetess has developed into a portly matron, anything but a skeleton, and very unlike the slender Miss of Jackson's time.

When Jefferson was President, the agricultural town of Cheshire, in Western Massachusetts, which had been drilled by its Democratic pastor, named Leland, into the unanimous support of the Sage of Monticello, determined to present him with the biggest cheese that had ever been seen. So on a given day every cow-owner brought his quota of freshly made curd to a large cider-press, which had been converted into a cheese-press, and in which a cheese was pressed that weighed one thousand six hundred pounds. It was brought to Washington in the following winter on a sled, under the charge of Parson Leland, and in the name of the people of Cheshire, was formally presented to President Jefferson in the then unfinished East Room. Jefferson, of course, returned thanks, and after having a great wedge cut from the cheese, to send back to the donors, he invited all present to help themselves. The cheese was variegated in appearance, owing to so many dairies having contributed the curd, but the flavor was pronounced the best ever tasted in Washington.

Jackson's admirers thought that every honor which Jefferson had ever received should be paid him, so some of them, residing in a rural district of New York, got up, under the superintendence of a Mr. Meacham, a mammoth cheese for "Old Hickory." After having been exhibited at New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, it was kept for some time in the vestibule at the



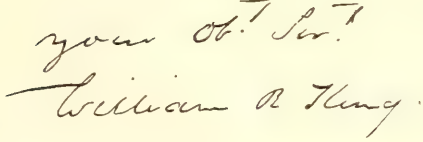
THE GREAT CHEESE LEVEE.

White House, and was finally cut at an afternoon reception on the 22d of February, 1837. For hours did a crowd of men, women, and boys hack at the cheese, many taking large hunks of it away with them. When they commenced, the cheese weighed one thousand four hundred pounds, and only a small piece was saved for the President's use. The air was redolent with cheese, the carpet was slippery with cheese, and nothing else

was talked about at Washington that day. Even the scandal about the wife of the President's Secretary of War was forgotten in the tumultuous jubilation of that great occasion.

General Jackson received that day for the last time at the White House, and was so feeble that he had to remain seated. Mrs. Donelson stood on one side, and on the other was Van Buren, who was inaugurated as President a fortnight later.

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WILLIAM RUFUS KING was born in North Carolina, April 1st, 1786; was a Representative in Congress from Alabama from November 4th, 1811, until he resigned to accompany William Pinkney to Russia as Secretary of Legation, April 23d, 1816; was United States Senator from Alabama from March 4th, 1819, until he resigned to go as Minister to France, April 9th, 1844; was again United States Senator from December 7th, 1846, to March 4th, 1853; was elected Vice-President on the Pierce ticket in 1852, as a Democrat, receiving two hundred and fifty-four electoral votes, against forty-two electoral votes for W. R. Graham, a Whig; having gone to Europe for his health, he took the oath of office near Havana, March 4th, 1853; returning to his home at Catawba, Alabama, where he died, April 18th, 1853, the day following his arrival.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### VAN BUREN'S STORMY ADMINISTRATION.

INAUGURATION OF VAN BUREN—HIS FIRST RECEPTION—DEPARTURE OF JACKSON FOR THE HERMITAGE—VAN BUREN'S EMBARRASSMENTS—THE GREAT FINANCIAL DEBATE—ANTAGONISM OF CLAY AND CALHOUN—AN ALL-NIGHT SESSION—MORNING EXCUSES—THE GRAVES AND CILLEY DUEL—A CONGRESSIONAL COMEDIAN.

WHILE the electoral votes for the eighth President of the United States were being counted, in the presence of the two Houses of Congress, Senator Clay remarked to Vice-President Van Buren, with courteous significance, "It is a cloudy day, sir!"

"The sun will shine on the 4th of March, sir!" was the Little Magician's confident reply.

The prediction was fulfilled, for on Van Buren's inaugural morning, March 4th, 1837, the sun shone brightly, and there was not a cloud to be seen. Washington was crowded with strangers from all parts of the country, and in anticipation of the time set for the ceremony great numbers began to direct their way at an early hour to the Capitol. Congregating before the eastern portico of the Capitol, the dense mass of humanity reminded those who had traveled abroad of the assembled multitude in front of St. Peter's on Easter Sunday waiting to receive the Papal blessing.

President Jackson and President-elect Van Buren were escorted from the White House to the Capitol by

a volunteer brigade of cavalry and infantry and by several Democratic political organizations. General Jackson and his successor rode in an elegant phaeton, constructed of oak from the original timber of the frigate Constitution. It had been made at Amherst, Massachusetts, and was presented by sixty admirers.



MARTIN VAN BUREN.

It had one seat, holding two persons, and a high box for the driver in front, bordered with a deep hammer-cloth. The unpainted wood was highly polished, and its fine grain was brought out by a coat of varnish, while on a panel on either side was a representation of "Old Ironsides" under full sail. The phaeton was

drawn by General Jackson's four iron-gray carriage-horses, with elaborate brass-mounted harness.

Arriving at the Capitol, General Jackson and Mr. Van Buren went to the Senate Chamber, where they witnessed Colonel Johnson take his oath of office as Vice-President. They then repaired to a platform erected over the steps of the eastern portico, followed by the Diplomatic Corps, the Senators, and the prin-

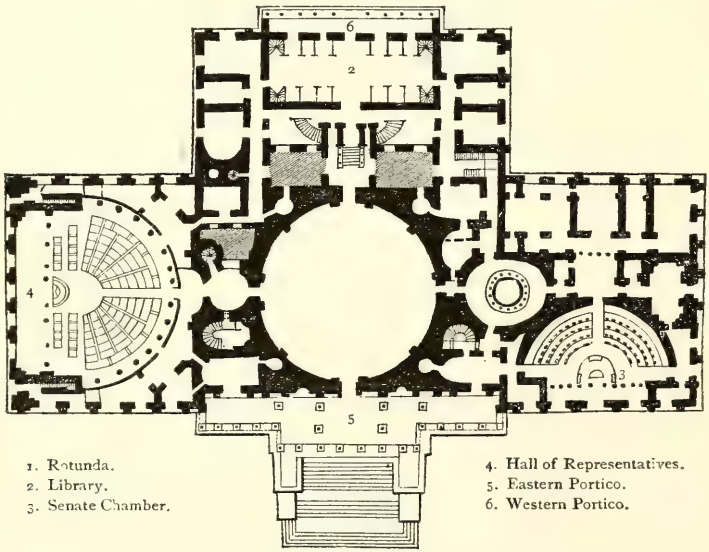



DIAGRAM OF MAIN FLOOR OF THE CAPITOL IN 1837.

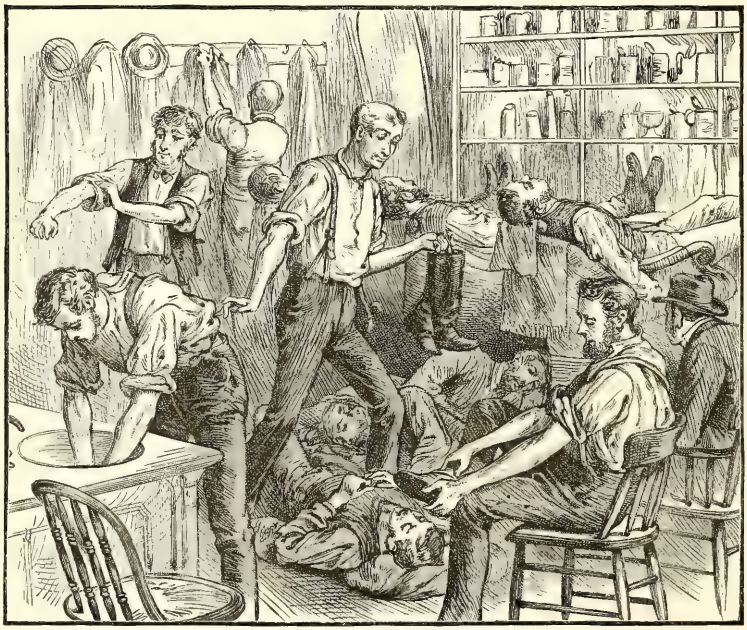
cipal executive officials. A cheer greeted the old hero, who had risen from a sick-bed, against the protest of his physician, that he might grace the scene, and a smile of satisfaction lit up his wan, stern features as he stood leaning on his cane with one hand and holding with the other his crape-bound white fur hat, while he acknowledged the compliment paid him by a succession of bows. Mr. Van Buren then advanced to the

front of the platform, and with impressive dignity read in a clear, distinct voice his inaugural address. His manner and emphasis were excellent, yet the effect upon the multitude was not what might have been expected from so great a collection of men devoted to his support. When he had concluded Chief Justice Taney administered the oath of office, and no sooner had Van Buren kissed the Bible, as a pledge of his assent, than General Jackson advanced and shook him cordially by the hand. The other dignitaries on the platform followed with their congratulations, the populace cheered, and the bands played "Hail to the Chief!"

President Van Buren and ex-President Jackson were then escorted back to the White House, where for three hours a surging tide of humanity swept past the new Chief Magistrate, congratulating him on his inauguration. The assemblage was a promiscuous one, and the reception was as disorderly an affair as could well be imagined. At four o'clock in the afternoon the members of the Diplomatic Corps called in a body, wearing their court dresses, and Don Calderon de la Barca, who was their Dean, presented a congratulatory address. In his reply, Mr. Van Buren made his only known *lapsus linguæ* by addressing them as the "Democratic corps." It was not until after his attention had been called to the mistake that he corrected himself, and stated that he had intended to say "Diplomatic Corps." In the evening two inauguration balls were given.

Many strangers had been unable to find conveyances to take them away and could not obtain lodging places. It was interesting, toward nightfall, to witness the gathering anxiety in many a good citizen's countenance as he went from boarding-house to hotel, and from hotel to private residence, seeking lodgings in

vain. Money could indeed procure the most luxurious dishes and the rarest beverages; but while the palate could be gratified there was no rest for weary limbs. "Beds! beds! beds!" was the general cry. Hundreds slept in the market-house on bundles of hay, and a party of distinguished Bostonians passed the night in the shaving-chairs of a barber's shop.

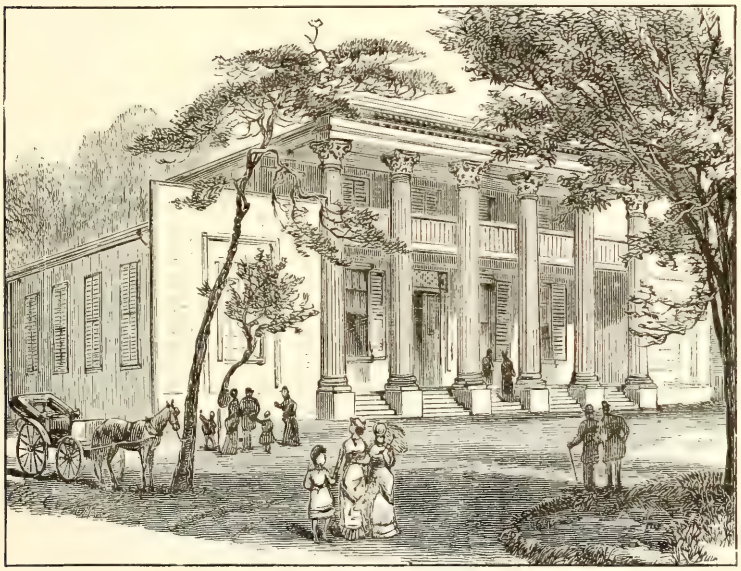


CAMPING IN A BARBER-SHOP.

General Jackson soon left for Tennessee, relieved from the cares of the Presidential station, and exhibiting an unwonted gayety of spirit. During the previous winter he had not expected to live until the conclusion of his term, and he could but feel buoyant and happy in finding himself sufficiently recovered to undertake the journey, with the prospect of enjoying some years

at the Hermitage, in the midst of the agricultural occupations of which he was so fond.

President Van Buren was the first President who had not been born a British subject, yet he was at heart a monarchist, opposed to universal suffrage, and in favor of a strong central government, although he had reached his exalted position by loud professions of democracy. He endeavored to establish a personal inti-



THE HERMITAGE.

macy with every one presented to him, and he ostensibly opened his heart for inspection. The tone of his voice was that of thorough frankness, accompanied by a pleasant smile, but a fixed expression at the corners of his mouth and the searching look of his keen eyes showed that he believed, with Talleyrand, that language was given to conceal thought. He found himself saddled at the commencement of his Administration with

national financial embarrassments, bequeathed as a legacy by his "illustrious predecessor," as he designated General Jackson in one of his messages. The destruction of the United States Bank had forced the transfer of the national funds, which it had held on deposit, to the State banks. They had loaned these funds on securities, often of doubtful value or worthless, and when the day of reckoning came general bankruptcy ensued. Manufacturers were obliged to discharge their workmen; provisions were scarce and dear in the Atlantic States, because funds could not be obtained for the removal eastward of the Western crops; and there was much actual distress in the large cities on the sea coast.

To quiet the popular clamor, President Van Buren convened Congress in an extra session, and in his message to that body on its assembling he proposed the establishment of an independent Treasury, with sub-Treasuries in different cities, for the safe keeping of the public money, entirely separate from the banks. The Whigs opposed this independent Treasury scheme, but, to the surprise of those with whom he had of late been politically affiliated, it received the cordial support of Mr. Calhoun. When Congress began to discuss this measure, he became its champion in the Senate, and soon "locked horns" with Mr. Clay, who led its opponents. The debate was continued session after session, and in time Messrs. Clay and Calhoun passed from their discussion of national finances into an acrimonious reciprocal review of the acts, votes, and motions of each other during the preceding thirty years.

During the debate in the House on the bill authorizing the issue of Treasury notes there was an all-night session. The Democrats had determined in caucus to

"sit out the bill," and whenever a Whig moved to adjourn his motion was promptly negatived. As darkness came on the lamps were lighted and trimmed, candles were brought into the hall, and the older and feebler members, "pairing off," took their cloaks and hats and left. The House being in Committee of the Whole, whenever they found no quorum voting, were obliged by the parliamentary usage to rise and report that fact to the House. When this was done, and the House was again in session as a House, behold, a quorum instantly appeared; and then, by the same law, they were obliged to return into Committee again. This happened so often that at length gentlemen of the Administration side became irritated, remonstrated, demanded that members should be counted in their seats, whether they had voted or no, and at length came to insist that individuals, by name, be compelled to vote. Such a motion having been made in one case, a voice cried out in the confusion which filled the chamber: "How are you going to do it?" and the query was succeeded by shouts of laughter, mingled with sounds of vexation.

As midnight approached it was curious to watch the various effects produced by the scene on different temperaments. Some yawned fearfully; others cursed and swore; others shook their sides with merriment; others reasoned and remonstrated with their neighbors; some very composedly stretched themselves upon the sofas, having first borrowed chair-cushions enough to support their somnolent heads; others bivouacked on three chairs, while some, not finding other convenient couch, stretched themselves flat on the floor of the House, with, perhaps, a volume of the Laws of the United States as their pillow.

At half-past one a call of the House was ordered, the doors were closed, and one hundred and forty-nine members were found to be present. This House went into Committee of the Whole to come out of it again, and the yeas and nays were called until the clerk grew hoarse. Thus rolled the hours away. Candles burned down to their sockets, forming picturesque grottoes of spermaceti as they declined; lamps went out in suffocating fumes. Some insisted on having a window up; others on having it down.

When the morning light began to dawn through the large south windows of the Representatives' Hall, it contrasted strongly with the glare of lights, the smoke of the lamps, and all the crowded tumult within. At four o'clock the Sergeant-at-Arms arrived with Corwin, Giddings, and a dozen other captured absentees, who were, one by one, required to account for their absence by the Speaker, who would say: "Mr. A B, you have absented yourself from the House during its sittings, contrary to law, and without leave of the House; what excuse have you to offer?" And then the unfortunate men made out the best story they could. Some had been sick; others had had a sick wife; others had got a bad headache from the late session; some had witnessed such night scenes on former occasions, and did not wish to see the like again; one had told the Sergeant he would come if he would send a hack for him, and no hack had been sent; while one very cavalierly informed the House that the reason why he had been absent was that he had not been there. Many were excused altogether; others discharged from custody on paying their fines (about two dollars each to the Sergeant for his fee of arrest). One batch having thus been disposed of, the officer was dispatched to make

another haul, and in the meantime the old game was continued; and, as neither party would yield, the unprofitable contest was prolonged, not till broad daylight merely, but down to eleven o'clock, when, all propositions of compromise having been rejected, the debate was regularly renewed. Finally, at a quarter before five o'clock, the House adjourned, quite fagged out.

Among other evidences of the bitter and ferocious spirit which characterized political contests in those days was the duel between Representative Cilley, of Maine, and Representative Graves, of Kentucky, in which the former fell. Mr. Cilley, in a speech delivered in the House of Representatives, criticised a charge of corruption brought against some unnamed Congressman in a letter published in the New York *Courier and Enquirer*, over the signature of "A Spy in Washington," and indorsed in the editorial columns of that paper. Mr. James Watson Webb, the editor of the *Courier and Enquirer*, immediately visited Washington and sent a challenge to Mr. Cilley by Mr. Graves, with whom he had but a slight acquaintance. Mr. Cilley declined to receive the hostile communication from Mr. Graves, without making any reflection on the personal character of Mr. Webb. Mr. Graves then felt himself bound by the unwritten code of honor to espouse the cause of Mr. Webb, and challenged Mr. Cilley himself. This challenge was accepted, and the preliminaries were arranged between Mr. Henry A. Wise, as the second of Mr. Graves, and Mr. George W. Jones, as the second of Mr. Cilley. Rifles were selected as the weapons, and Mr. Graves found difficulty in obtaining one, but was finally supplied by his friend, Mr. Rives, of the *Globe*. The parties met, the ground was measured, and the combatants were placed;

on the fourth fire Mr. Cilley fell, shot through the body, and died almost instantly. Mr. Graves, on seeing his antagonist fall, expressed a desire to render him some assistance, but was told by Mr. Jones, "My friend is dead, sir!" Mr. Cilley, who left a wife and three young children, was a popular favorite, and his tragic end caused a great excitement all over the country. Mr. Wise was generally blamed for having instigated the fatal encounter; certainly, he did not endeavor to prevent it. His relation to the affair won him a life-long notoriety, and gave him position as an authority on such affairs, as is illustrated in an autograph letter, now in my possession, written several years later by Preston S. Brooks to Mr. Wise, in which he says: "I write to ask where your argument in support of the Southern mode of settling quarrels may be found? Mr. Clingman, of North Carolina, thinks that it was made with reference to the Graves and Cilley meeting. Mr. C. wishes to avail himself of some of your views."

The Capital had its comedies as well as its tragedies, and the leading comedian was Thomas Corwin, a Representative from Ohio, who was a type of early Western culture and a born humorist. He was a middle-sized, somewhat stout man, with cheery, pleasing manners, a fine head, sparkling hazel eyes, and a complexion so dark that on several occasions—as he used to narrate with great glee—he was supposed to be of African descent. "There is no need of my working," said he, "for whenever I cannot support myself in Ohio, all I should have to do would be to cross the river, give myself up to a Kentucky negro-trader, be taken South, and sold for a field hand." He always had a story ready to illustrate a subject of conversation, and the

dry manner in which he enlivened his speeches by pungent witticism, without a smile on his own stolid countenance, was irresistible.

He was once addressing a Whig mass meeting at Marietta, Ohio, and was taking especial pains not to say anything that could offend the Abolitionists, who were beginning to throw a large vote. A sharp witted opponent, to draw him out asked: "Shouldn't niggers be permitted to sit at the table with white folks, on steamboats and at hotels?" "Fellow-citizens," exclaimed Corwin, his swarthy features beaming with suppressed fun, "I ask you whether it is proper to ask such a question of a gentleman of my color?" The crowd cheered and the questioner was silenced.



MARTIN VAN BUREN was born at Kinderhook, New York, December 5th, 1782; was a United States Senator from New York from December 3d, 1821, to December 20th, 1828, when he resigned to accept the office of Governor of New York; this position he resigned on the 12th of March, 1829, having been appointed by President Jackson Secretary of State of the United States; this position he resigned August 1st, 1831, having been appointed by President Jackson Minister to Great Britain, but the Senate rejected his nomination; was elected Vice-President on the Jackson ticket in 1832; was elected President in 1836; was defeated as the Democratic candidate for President in 1840; was the candidate of the Anti-Slavery party for President in 1848, and died at Kinderhook, New York, July 24th, 1862.

## CHAPTER XV.

### COMMENCEMENT OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENT.

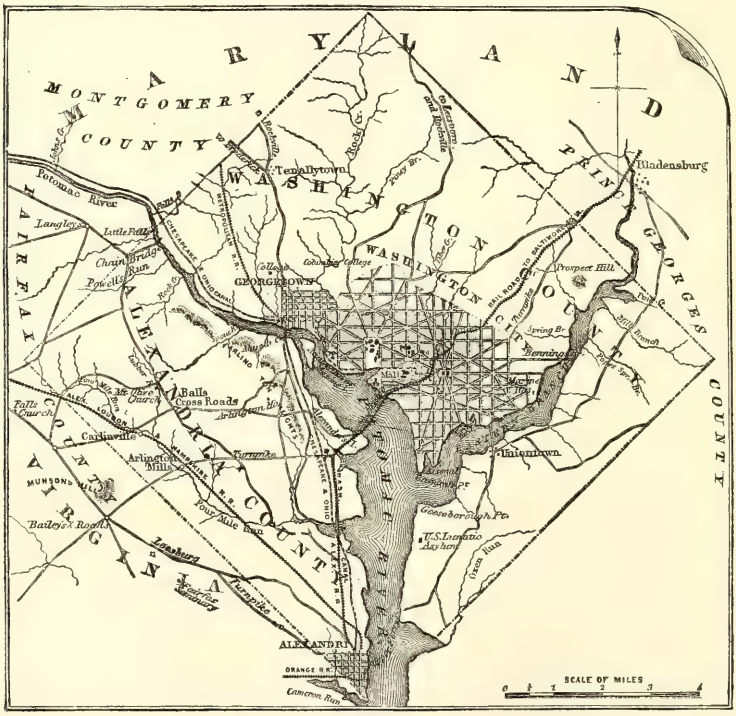
AGITATION OF THE SLAVERY QUESTION—EARLY SECESSION MOVEMENTS—DANIEL WEBSTER ON EMANCIPATION—HIS IDEA OF THE FAR WEST—FRANKLIN PIERCE'S POSITION—SERGEANT S. PRENTISS, THE FOREMOST OF ORATORS—JOSEPH HOLT—W. R. KING—THE BUCKSHOT WAR—STAR ROUTES—PRESIDENT VAN BUREN'S TITLES.

IT was during the Administration of Mr. Van Buren that the English Abolitionists first began to propagate their doctrines in the Northern States, where the nucleus of an anti-slavery party was soon formed. This alarmed the Southerners, who, under the lead of Mr. Calhoun, threatened disunion if their "peculiar institution" was not let alone. The gifted South Carolinian having in January, 1838, paid a high compliment in debate to John Randolph for his uncompromising hostility to the Missouri Compromise, Mr. Clay said: "I well remember the Compromise Act and the part taken in that discussion by the distinguished member from Virginia, whose name has been mentioned, and whose death I most sincerely lament. At that time we were members of the other House. Upon one occasion, during a night session, another member from Virginia, through fatigue and the offensive exhalations from one of the surrounding lamps, fainted in his seat and was borne to the rear of the Representatives' Hall. Calling some one to the Speaker's chair, I left my place to learn the character

and extent of his illness. Returning to the desk, I was met in one of the aisles by Mr. Randolph, to whom I had not spoken for several weeks. 'Ah, Mr. Speaker,' said he, 'I wish you would leave Congress and go to Kentucky. I will follow you there or anywhere else.' I well understood what he meant, for at that time a proposition had been made to the Southern members, and the matter partly discussed by them, of leaving Congress in the possession of the Northern members and returning home, each to his respective constituents. I told Mr. Randolph that I could not then speak to him about the matter, and requested him to meet me in the Speaker's room early the next morning. With his usual punctuality he came. We talked over the Compromise Act, he defending his favorite position and I defending mine. We were together an hour, but to no purpose. Through the whole he was unyielding and uncompromising to the last. We parted, shook hands, and promised to be good friends, and I never met him again during the session. Such," continued Mr. Clay, "was the part Mr. Randolph took in that discussion, and such were his uncompromising feelings of hostility toward the North and all who did not believe with him. His acts came near shaking this Union to the centre and desolating this fair land. The measures before us now, and the unyielding and uncompromising spirit are like then, and tend to the same sad and dangerous end—dissolution and desolation, disunion and ruin."

On the same day, in 1838, Mr. Webster gave in his opinion that Congress had power to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. That power, he said, was granted in the most express, explicit, and undoubted terms. It declared that Congress should have "exclu-

sive jurisdiction over all subjects whatsoever in the District of Columbia." Mr. Webster said that he had searched and listened for some argument or some law to controvert this position. He had read and studied carefully the act of cession of the ten miles square




ORIGINAL DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

from Maryland and Virginia, and he could find nothing there, and nowhere else, to gainsay the plain and express letter of the Constitution. This inspired the Abolitionists with the hope that Mr. Webster would become the leader of the crusade against slavery that

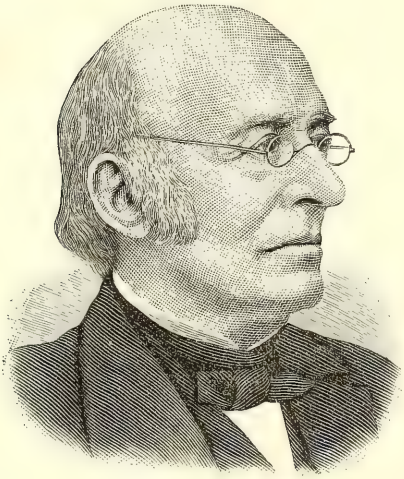
they had decided to inaugurate. At that time he unquestionably leaned toward emancipation, not only in the District of Columbia, but everywhere in the United States. This was noticed by the Southern leaders, who began to tempt him with promises of support for the Presidency—promises which were subsequently broken again and again that a more subservient and available tool might be placed in power.

Before allying himself with the South, Mr. Webster endeavored to identify himself with the West by investing largely in a city laid out on paper in a township in Rock Island County, Illinois. It was at the mouth of Rock River, and it was to have borne the name of Rock Island City. Fletcher Webster went out there and remained for a time, I think, accompanied by his friend, George Curson. Caleb Cushing was also interested in the embryo city, but somehow it was not a success.

Mr. Webster had, however, a very vague idea of the "Great West" of his day. On one occasion when he was in the Senate a proposition was before it to establish a mail-route from Independence, Mo., to the mouth of the Columbia River, some three thousand miles, across plains and mountains, about the extent of which the public then knew no more than they did of the interior of Thibet. Mr. Webster, after denouncing the measure generally, closed with a few remarks concerning the country at large. "What do we want?" he exclaimed, "with this vast, worthless area? This region of savages and wild beasts, of deserts of shifting sands and whirlwinds of dust, of cactus and prairie dogs? To what use could we ever hope to put these great deserts, or those endless mountain ranges, impenetrable and covered to their very base with eternal

snow? What can we ever hope to do with the western coast, a coast of three thousand miles, rock-bound, cheerless, uninviting, and not a harbor on it? What use have we for this country?"

Franklin Pierce, who had served two terms in the House of Representatives, was then elected to the Senate. He proved a valuable recruit for the Southern ranks, as when in the House he had risen one day to a question of privilege, and warmly resented the reading by Mr. Calhoun in the Senate of an article from the Concord *Herald of Freedom*, which declared that the Abolitionists in New Hampshire were as one to thirty. This journal, Mr. Pierce said, "was too insignificant and too odious, in the eyes of his constituents, to be cited as authority. No age or country had ever been free from fanatics, and with equal justice might the whole people of New York be charged with being followers of Matthias as the people of New Hampshire for favoring the designs of the Knapps and Garrisons and Thompsons."



WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

Sergeant Smith Prentiss, who came to Washington during the Van Buren Administration to claim a seat in Congress as a Representative from Mississippi, was the most eloquent speaker that I have ever heard. The

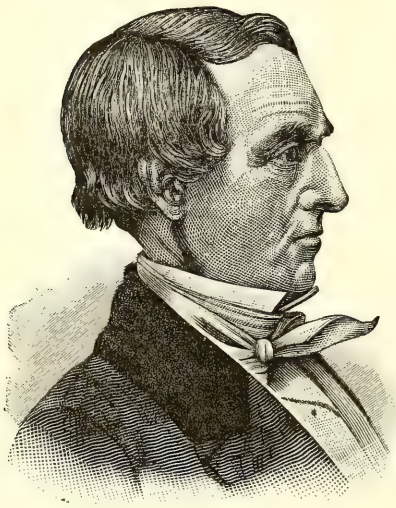
lame and lisping boy from Maine had ripened, under the Southern sun, into a master orator. The original, ever-varying, and beautiful imagery with which he illustrated and enforced his arguments impressed Webster, Clay, Everett, and even John Quincy Adams. But his forte lay in arraigning his political opponents, when his oratory was "terrible as an army with banners;" nothing could stand against the energy of his look, gesture, and impassioned logic, when once he was fairly under way, in denouncing the tricks and selfish cunning of mere party management. The printed reports of his speeches are mere skeletons, which give but a faint idea of them. Even the few rhetorical passages that are retained have lost much of their original form and beauty. The professional stenographers confessed themselves utterly baffled in the attempt to report him, and he was quite as unfitted to report himself. Indeed, he complained that he never could reproduce the best thoughts, still less the exact language, of his speeches.



JOSEPH HOLT.

The principal antagonist of Mr. Prentiss, in the courts of Mississippi, was Joseph Holt, a young Kentucky lawyer, who had acquired a national reputation for oratory by a speech which he made in the National

Democratic Convention of 1836, when he advocated the nomination of Colonel Richard M. Johnson in a speech of great beauty and power. His arguments were persuasive, the tones of his voice were melodious, and he insinuated himself and his cause into the hearts of his audience, rather than carried them by storm. Devoted to the South and its peculiar institution, he was welcomed in the State of Mississippi, and soon took a prominent position at the bar of her higher courts.



WILLIAM RUFUS KING.

William Rufus King, of Alabama, who was elected President *pro tempore* of the Senate while Colonel Johnson was Vice-President, was a prim, spare bachelor, known among his friends as "Miss Nancy King." When a young man he had accompanied the Minister to Russia, William Pinkney, to St. Petersburg, as Secretary of the Legation of the United States. Residing there for two years, he acquired the formal manners of the Court of the Emperor Alexander, with a diplomatic craftiness which he always retained. He was a courteous presiding officer, as was thus oddly exemplified while he occupied the chair. The two Senators from the State of Arkansas pronounced the name of their State differently. Mr. King punctiliously observed the difference, invariably

recognizing one as "the gentleman from Ar-kan-sas," and the other as "the gentleman from Ark-an-sas."

Mr. Van Buren was much exercised by a difficulty in the Pennsylvania Legislature, which the State militia was called out to quell, and which it was thought might result in a demand for the intervention of United States troops. Thaddeus Stevens, then an ardent Whig, was a leader in the attempt to force eleven illegally elected members into the House at the point of the bayonet, the troops having their muskets loaded with buckshot. When the enterprise collapsed, Stevens jumped from a back window of the Capitol and ran off to Gettysburg, where he remained without claiming his seat for about a month, when he came in and offered to take the oath, but the House resolved, with great solemnity, that the seat was vacant, although others who had been out nearly as long were admitted without hesitation.



THADDEUS STEVENS.

A prominent young Virginia lawyer, named William Smith, who practiced at Culpepper Court-House, became interested in a mail-route between Washington City and Milledgeville, Georgia, and he grew to be an extensive contractor. Many of his mail-routes were but little more than bridle-paths, over which the mails

were carried on horseback. With an eye to the main chance, and with a laudable desire to extend the mail facilities of Virginia, Mr. Smith managed to secure a large number of "expeditions" through Parson Obadiah Bruin Brown, commonly called "Parson Obadiah Bruin Beeswax Brown," the Superintendent of the contract office of the Post-office Department. In place of the horseback system stage lines would be substituted, and this service would be frequently "expedited" without much of a view to "productiveness," from one trip to three or six trips per week. All of these "expeditions" were noted by stars (* *) at the bottom of Smith's vouchers, which, interpreted, meant "extra allowance." So frequently did these stars appear in the Virginia contractor's accounts that he soon came to be known in the Post-office Department as "Extra Billy" Smith, and it adhered to him in after life, when he became a member of the House of Representatives and afterward Governor of Virginia. He still lives at Warrenton, a hale and hearty old man.

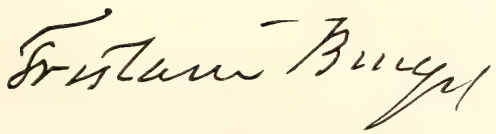
Mr. Van Buren had an abundance of political nicknames. He was "the sweet little fellow" of Mr. Ritchie of the *Richmond Inquirer*, and "the Northern man with Southern principles" of the *Charleston Courier;* Mr. Clinton baptized him "the Political Grimalkin;" Mr. Calhoun, "the Weazel;" while he helped himself to the still less flattering name of "the follower in the footsteps"—that is, the successor of his predecessor, a sort of masculine *Madame Blaize*,

> "Who strove the neighborhood to please,
> With manners wondrous winning,
> And never followed wicked ways,
> Except when she was sinning,"

who clad all the hungry and naked office-holders "that

left a pledge behind" of supporting him; and, like that good dame, led the way to all those who came behind her.

The Southern nullifiers, who had been "squelched" by General Jackson, began to revive under the more genial rule of Mr. Van Buren, and they established an "organ" called the Washington *Chronicle*. It was edited by Richard K. Cralle, who came from Leesburg, Virginia. He was a well-educated gentleman, ultra in his opinions on free trade and Southern rights; but those who were enthusiastic in their praises of his editorials did not subscribe to the *Chronicle*, or if they did, never condescended to pay their subscriptions. So the paper ruined its printers and then gave up the ghost, Mr. Calhoun securing a department clerkship for Mr. Cralle.



TRISTAM BURGESS was born at Rochester, Massachusetts, February 26th, 1770; was a Representative in Congress from Rhode Island from December 1st, 1825, until March 3d, 1835; was defeated as the Whig candidate for Congress, and afterward as the Whig candidate for Governor, and died at Providence, Rhode Island, October 13th, 1853.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE AT WASHINGTON.

PRESIDENTIAL HOSPITALITIES—SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENTS—A GIFTED ADVENTURESS—ESPY, THE WEATHER KING—A FOREIGN INDORSEMENT—VAN BUREN'S RE-ELECTION—THE OGLE SPEECH—VAN BUREN'S NEW YEAR'S RECEPTION.

PRESIDENT VAN BUREN'S wife (by birth Miss Hannah Hoes, of Columbia County, New York) had been dead nineteen years when he took possession of the White House, accompanied by his four sons, and presided over the official receptions and dinner parties with his well-known tact and politeness. In the November following his inauguration, his eldest son and private secretary, Colonel Abraham Van Buren (who was a graduate of the Military Academy at West Point, and who had served on the staff of General Worth), was married to Miss Angelica Singleton, a wealthy South Carolina lady, who had been educated at Philadelphia, and who had passed the preceding winter at Washington in the family of her relative, Senator Preston. On the New Year's day succeeding the wedding Mrs. Van Buren, assisted by the wives of the Cabinet officers, received with her father-in-law, the President. Her rare accomplishments, superior education, beauty of face and figure, grace of manner, and vivacity in conversation insured social success. The White House was refurnished in the most expensive manner, and a code of

etiquette was established which rivaled that of a German principality.

The President endeavored to restore the good feeling between the Administration and Washington "society," which had been ruptured during the political rule of General Jackson. He gave numerous entertainments at the White House, and used to attend those given by his Cabinet, which was regarded as an innovation, as his predecessors had never accepted social invitations. Ex-President Adams, the widow of President Madison, and the widow of Alexander Hamilton each formed the centre of a pleasant coterie, and the President was open in the expression of his desire that the members of his Cabinet and their principal subordinates should each give a series of dinner-parties and evening receptions during the successive sessions of Congress.

The dinner-parties were very much alike, and those who were in succession guests at different houses often saw the same table ornaments, and were served by the same waiters, while the fare was prepared by the same cook. The guests used to assemble in the parlor, which was almost invariably connected with the dining-room by large folding doors. When the dinner was ready the doors were thrown open, and the table was revealed, laden with china and cut-glass ware. A watery compound called vegetable soup was invariably served, followed by boiled fish, overdone roast beef or mutton, roast fowl or game in season, and a great variety of puddings, pies, cakes, and ice-creams. The fish, meat, and fowl were carved and helped by the host, while the lady of the house distributed the vegetables, the pickles, and the dessert. Champagne, without ice, was sparingly supplied in long, slender glasses, but there was no lack of sound claret, and with the dessert several

bottles of old Madeira were generally produced by the host, who succinctly gave the age and history of each. The best Madeira was that labeled "The Supreme Court," as their Honors, the Justices, used to make a direct importation every year, and sip it as they consulted over the cases before them every day after dinner, when the cloth had been removed. Some rare old specimens of this wine can still be found in Washington wine-cellars.



MRS. EX-PRESIDENT MADISON.

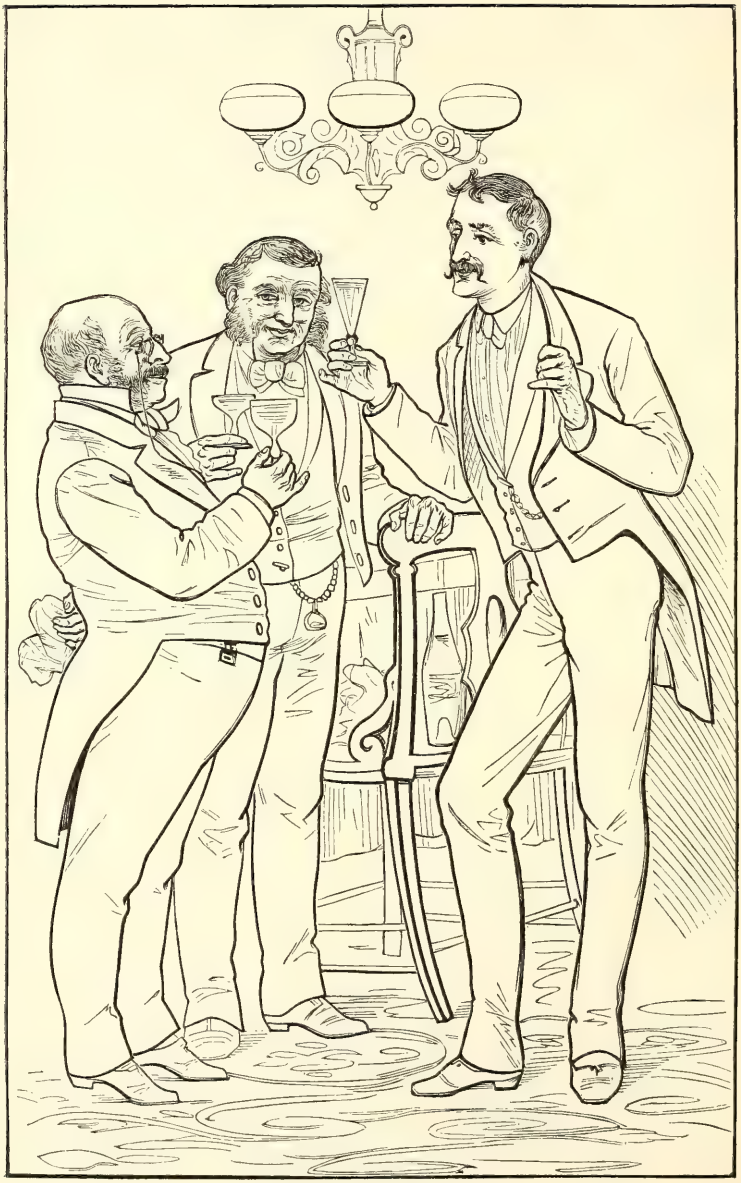
At the evening parties the carpet was lifted from the room set apart for dancing, and to protect the dancers from slipping the floor was chalked, usually in colors. The music was almost invariably a first and second violin, with flute and harp accompaniments. Light refreshments, such as water-ices, lemonade, negus, and small cakes were handed about on waiters between every two or three dances. The crowning glory of the entertainment, however, was the supper, prepared under the supervision of the hostess, aided by some of her intimate friends, who also loaned their china and silverware. The table was covered with *a la mode* beef, cold roast turkey, duck, and chicken, fried and stewed oysters, blanc-mange, jellies, whips, floating islands, candied oranges, and numerous varieties of

tarts and cakes. Very often the older men would linger after the ladies had departed, and even reassemble with the host, and discuss the wines *ad libitum*, if not *ad nauseam*, while the young men, after having escorted the ladies to their respective homes, would meet again at some oyster-house to go out on a lark, in imitation of the young English bloods in the favorite play of Tom and Jerry. Singing, or rather shouting, popular songs, they would break windows, wrench off knockers, call up doctors, and transpose sign-boards; nor was there a night watchman to interfere with their roistering.



AMERICA VESPUCCI.

A decided sensation was created at Washington during the Van Buren Administration by the appearance there of a handsome and well-educated Italian lady, who called herself America Vespucci, and claimed descent from the navigator who gave his name to this continent. Ex-President Adams and Daniel Webster became her especial friends, and she was soon a welcome guest in the best society. In a few weeks after her arrival, she presented a petition to Congress asking, first, to be admitted to the rights of citizenship; and, secondly, to be given "a corner of land" out of the public domain of the country which bore the name of her



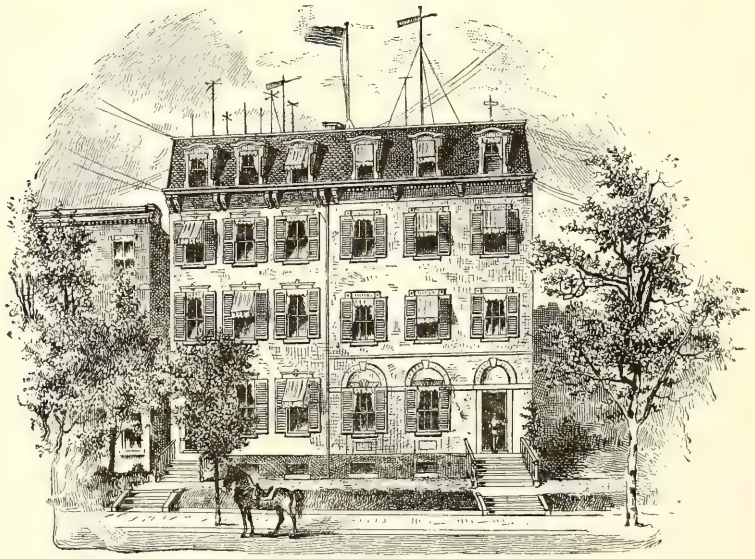
AFTER THE LADIES HAVE GONE.

ancestor. An adverse report, which was soon made, is one of the curiosities of Congressional literature. It eulogized the petitioner as "a young, dignified, and graceful lady, with a mind of the highest intellectual culture, and a heart beating with all our own enthusiasm in the cause of America and human liberty." The reasons why the prayer of the petitioner could not be granted were given, but she was commended to the generosity of the American people. "The name of America—our country's name—should be honored, respected, and cherished in the person of the interesting exile from whose ancestor we derive the great and glorious title."

A subscription was immediately opened by Mr. Haight, the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate, and Judges, Congressmen, and citizens vied with one another in their contributions. Just then it was whispered that Madame Vespucci had borne an unenviable reputation at Florence and at Paris, and had been induced by a pecuniary consideration to break off an intimacy with the Duke of Orleans, Louis Philippe's oldest son, and come to Washington. Soon afterward the Duke's younger brother, the Prince de Joinville, came to this country, and refused to recognize her, which virtually excluded her from reputable society. For some years subsequently she resided in luxurious seclusion with a wealthy citizen of New York, in the interior of that State, and after his death she returned to Paris.

During the Van Buren Administration James P. Espy came to Washington to initiate what has grown into the Weather Signal Service. He was a Pennsylvanian by birth, and so poor in early life that when seventeen years of age he had not been able to learn to read. He subsequently mastered the English

language and the classics, and long before he knew why began to study the mystery of the moving clouds and to form his storm theories. At last he asked of Congress an appropriation of five thousand dollars a year for five years, but he was met with jibes and ridicule. Senator Preston, of South Carolina, said



SIGNAL SERVICE AND WEATHER BUREAU.

Espy was a madman, too dangerous to be at large, and the Senator would vote a special appropriation for a prison in which to confine him. Espy was in the Senate gallery at the time. Wounded to the quick, he left the Capital and went to New York, where he delivered a course of lectures with great success. They were repeated in Boston, and he made money enough to enable him to visit Europe.

Not long after reaching Liverpool, January 6th, 1839, a great storm occurred. He went to Lloyds', consulted the newspapers as they arrived, noted the direction of the wind as given at different places, and from these data constructed the first great storm map ever prepared, with the hour points marked. Every line and curve and point exemplified his theory. He was at no loss now for audiences. He appeared before the British Association of Scientists at London, at which Sir John Herschel was present, an interested auditor. He crossed the channel to Paris, and the Academy of Sciences appointed a committee, composed of the illustrious Arago, "to report upon his observations and theory." The effect of this report, when it reached Washington, was not much different from that which followed, afterward, the announcement of Morse's first transmitted message over the wire from Washington to Baltimore.



AMOS KENDALL.

Aided by General Jackson and the "machinery" of the Democratic party, engineered by Amos Kendall, Mr. Van Buren secured for himself the re-nomination for the Presidency. But he had great obstacles to contend with. The financial condition of the country, deranged by the absence of the controlling power of

the United States Bank, grew worse and worse. There was a total stagnation of business throughout the Union, and from every section came tidings of embarrassment, bankruptcy, and ruin. There were no available funds for the purchase of Western produce and its transportation to the Atlantic markets, so it remained in the hands of the farmers, who could not dispose of it except at a great sacrifice. In Ohio, for example, pork was sold at three dollars a hundred pounds, and wheat at fifty cents per bushel, while the price of agricultural labor was but thirty-seven and a-half cents a day.

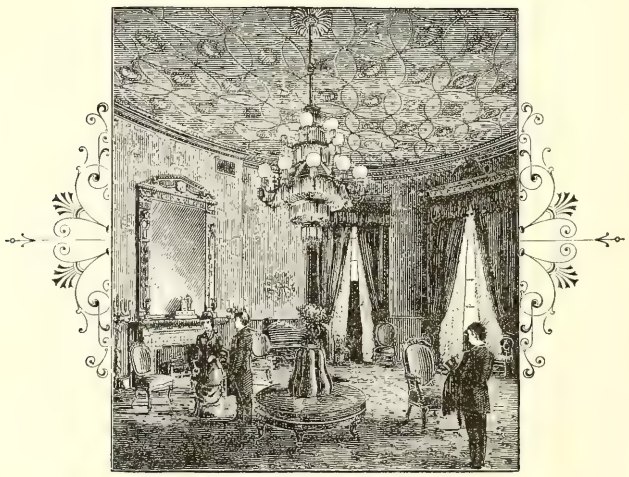
The campaign was carried on with great bitterness in Congress, where the leading Whigs cordially united in a decisive warfare on the Democrats. General Harrison was eulogized as a second Cincinnatus—plowman, citizen, and general—and the sneering remark that he resided in a log-cabin was adopted as a partisan watchword. The most notable speech was by Mr. Ogle, of Pennsylvania, who elaborately reviewed the expensive furniture, china, and glassware which had been imported for the White House by order of President Van Buren. He dwelt on the gorgeous splendor of the damask window curtains, the dazzling magnificence of the large mirrors, chandeliers, and candelabra; the centre-tables, with their tops of Italian marble; the satin-covered chairs, tabourets, and divans; the imperial carpets and rugs, and, above all, the service of silver, including a set of what he called gold spoons, although they were of silver-gilt. These costly decorations of the White House were described in detail, with many humorous comments, and then contrasted with the log-cabins of the West, where the only ornamentation, generally speaking, was a string of speckled birds'-eggs festooned about a looking-glass measuring

eight by ten inches, and a fringed window curtain of white cotton cloth.

Having described the furniture and the table service of the White House, as purchased by direction of the President, Mr. Ogle proceeded to sketch Van Buren's New Year's receptions. "Instead," said he, "of weekly receptions, when all the people were at liberty to partake of the good cheer of the President's house, there had been substituted one cold, stiff, formal, and ceremonious assembly on the first day of every year. At this annual levee, notwithstanding its pomp and pageantry, no expense whatever is incurred by the President personally. No fruits, cake, wine, coffee, hard cider, or other refreshments of any kind are tendered to his guests. Indeed, it would militate against all the rules of court etiquette, now established at the palace, to permit vulgar eating and drinking on this grand gala day. The Marine Band, however, is always ordered from the Navy Yard and stationed in the spacious front hall, from whence they swell the rich saloons of the palace with 'Hail to the Chief!' 'Wha'll be King but Charley?' and other humdrum airs, which ravish with delight the ears of warriors who have never smelt powder. As the people's cash, and not his own, pays for all the services of the Marine Band, its employment at the palace does not conflict with the peculiar views of the President in regard to the obvious difference between public and private economy.

"At these 'annual State levees,' the great doors of the 'East Room,' 'Blue Elliptical Saloon,' 'Green Drawing Room,' and 'Yellow Drawing Room' are thrown open at twelve o'clock 'precisely' to the anxious feet of gayly appareled noblemen, honorable men, gentlemen, and ladies of all the nations and king-

doms of the earth, many of whom appear ambitiously intent upon securing an early recognition from the head of the mansion. The President, at the 'same instant of time,' assumes his station about four feet within the 'Blue Elliptical Saloon,' and facing the door which looks out upon the spacious front hall, but is separated from it, as before remarked, by a screen of Ionic columns. He is supported on the right and left



THE BLUE ROOM.

by the Marshal of the District of Columbia and by one of the high officers of the Government. The Marine Band having been assigned their position at the eastern end of the hall, with all their fine instruments in full tune, 'at the same identical moment' strike up one of our most admired 'national airs;' and forthwith a current of life flows in at the wide-spread outer door of the palace, and glides with the smoothness of music through the spacious hall by the Ionic screen into the royal presence. Here (to drop for a moment my liquid

figure) each and every individual is presented and received with a gentle shake of the hand, and is greeted with that 'smile eternal' which plays over the soft features of Mr. Van Buren, save when he calls to mind how confoundedly 'Old Tip' chased, caught, and licked Proctor and Tecumseh. Immediately after the introduction or recognition the current sets toward the 'East Room,' and thus this stream of living men and women continues to flow and flow and flow, for about the space of three hours—the 'Democratic President' being the only orb around which all this pomp, pride, and parade revolve. To him all these lesser planets turn, 'as the sunflower turns' to the sun, and feel their colors brightened when a ray of favor or a 'royal smile' falls upon them."

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William Learned Marcy was born at Sturbridge, Massachusetts, December 12th, 1786; was United States Senator from New York from December 5th, 1831, to July, 1832, when he resigned; was Governor of the State of New York, 1833–1839; was Secretary of War under President Polk, March 5th, 1845, to March 3d, 1849; was Secretary of State under President Pierce, March 7th, 1853, to March 4th, 1857, and died at Ballston Spa, New York, July 4th, 1857.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE LOG CABIN AND HARD CIDER CAMPAIGN.

THE HARRISON CAMPAIGN—POLITICAL SONGS—WHIG CONVENTIONS—GREAT PARADES—CORWIN'S REPLY TO CRARY—CRARY'S COMPLETE DISCOMFITURE—THE CAMPAIGN PAPER—HORACE GREELEY—HENRY CLAY ON THE STUMP—AMOS KENDALL—THE FALL ELECTIONS—PIPE-LAYING—THE WHIGS TRIUMPHANT.

THE Presidential campaign of 1840 surpassed in excitement and intensity of feeling all which had preceded it, and in these respects it has not since been equaled. It having been sneeringly remarked by a Democratic writer that General Harrison lived in a log cabin and had better remain there, the Whigs adopted the log cabin as one of their emblems. Log cabins were raised everywhere for Whig headquarters, some of them of large size, and almost every voting precinct had its Tippecanoe Club with its choristers.

For the first time in our land the power of song was invoked to aid a Presidential candidate, and immense editions of log cabin song-books were sold. Many of these songs were parodies on familiar ballads. One of the best compositions, the authorship of which was ascribed to George P. Morris, the editor of the New York *Mirror*, was a parody on the Old Oaken Bucket. The first verse ran :

"Oh! dear to my soul are the days of our glory,
The time-honored days of our national pride;
When heroes and statesmen ennobled our story,
And boldly the foes of our country defied:
When victory hung o'er our flag, proudly waving,
And the battle was fought by the valiant and true
For our homes and our loved ones, the enemies braving,
Oh! then stood the soldier of Tippecanoe—
The iron-armed soldier, the true-hearted soldier
The gallant old soldier of Tippecanoe."

Mass conventions were held by the Whigs in the

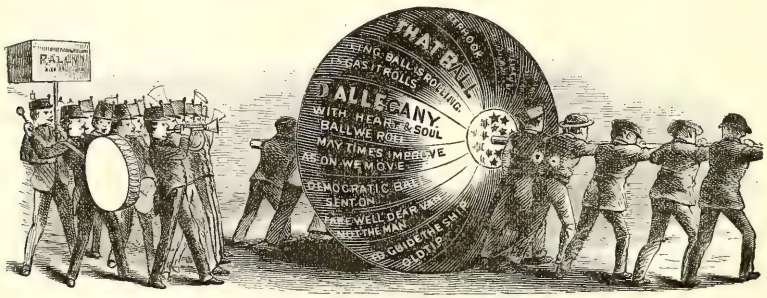



TIPPECANOE LOG CABIN.
(From a Campaign Engraving.)

larger cities and in the central towns at the great West. They were attended by thousands, who came from the plow, the forge, the counter, and the desk, at a sacrifice of personal convenience and often at considerable expense, to give a hearty utterance to their deep-felt opposition to the party in power. Delegations to these conventions would often ride in carriages or on horseback twenty-five or thirty miles, camping out during the excursion. They carried banners, and often had a

small log cabin mounted on wheels, in which was a barrel of hard cider, the beverage of the campaign. On the day of the convention, and before the speaking, there was always a procession, in which the delegations sang and cheered as they marched along, sometimes rolling balls on which were the names of the States, while the music of numerous bands aided in imparting enthusiasm.

The speaking was from a platform, over which floated the national flag, and on which were seated the invited guests, the local political magnates, the clergymen of




A TIPPECANOE PROCESSION.

the place, and generally a few Revolutionary soldiers, who were greeted with loud applause. The principal orators during the campaign were Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, William C. Preston, Henry A. Wise, Thomas Corwin, Thomas Ewing, Richard W. Thompson, and scores of less noted names. General Harrison took the stump himself at several of the Western gatherings, and spoke for over an hour on each occasion. His demeanor was that of a well-bred, well-educated, venerable Virginia gentleman, destitute of humor and fond of quoting from classic authors.

The favorite campaign document, of which hundreds

of thousands were circulated through the mails under the franks of the Whig Congressmen, was the reply in the House of Representatives by Thomas Corwin, of Ohio, to an attack upon Harrison's military record made by Mr. Isaac E. Crary. A native of Connecticut, Mr. Crary had migrated to Michigan, and was the first and the only Representative from that recently admitted State. Anxious to distinguish himself, he undertook to criticise the military career of General Harrison with great unfairness and partisan vigor. Mr. Corwin replied the next day in one of the most wonderful speeches ever delivered at Washington. For vigorous argument and genuine wit the speech has rarely been equaled. Those who heard it agree that his defense of Harrison was overwhelming and the annihilation of Crary complete. The House was convulsed with laughter at the richness and originality of the humor, and at times almost awed by the great dignity and profound arguments of the orator. The pages of history were ransacked for illustrations to sustain the speaker, and all were poured in rapid profusion upon the head of poor Crary, who sat amazed and stupefied at the storm he had provoked. As Corwin proceeded the members left their seats and clustered thickly about him, the reporters laid down their pens, the presiding officer his gavel, and everybody gave themselves up to the enjoyment of the hour. As Mr. Corwin painted in mock heroic style the knowledge of military affairs which the lawyer member from Michigan had acquired from reading *Tidd's Practice* and *Espinasse's Nisi Prius*, studies so happily adapted to the art of war, the House fairly roared with delight.

He drew a mirth-provoking picture of Crary in his capacity of a militia brigadier at the head of his legion

on parade day, with his "crop-eared, bushy-tailed mare and sickle hams—the steed that laughs at the shaking of the spear, and whose neck was clothed with thunder," and likened Crary to Alexander the Great with his war-horse, Bucephalus, at the head of his Macedonian phalanx.

He traced all the characteristic exploits of the assembled throng on those old-time mustering occasions. The wretched diversity in height and build of the



GENERAL CRARY MARSHALING HIS HOSTS.

marshaled hosts; the wild assortment of accoutrements, from the ancient battle-ax to the modern broom-stick; the trooping boys, the slovenly girls, the mock enthusiasm of the spectators, all were painted with a master's hand. Finally, after reciting Crary's deeds of valor and labor during the training day, Corwin left him and his exhausted troop at a corner grocery assuaging the fires of their souls with copious draughts of whisky drank from the shells of slaughtered watermelons. When Mr. Corwin came to give the history of General

Harrison and defend his military record, he rose to the height of pure eloquence, and spoke with convincing force and unanswerable logic. The fate of Crary was sealed. Probably no such personal discomfiture was ever known from the effect of a single speech. He never recovered from the blow, and was known at home and abroad as "the late General Crary." Even at home the farmers and the boys, in watermelon season, would always offer him the fruit with sly jests and jeers and a joke at his military career; but his public life and usefulness were at an end.

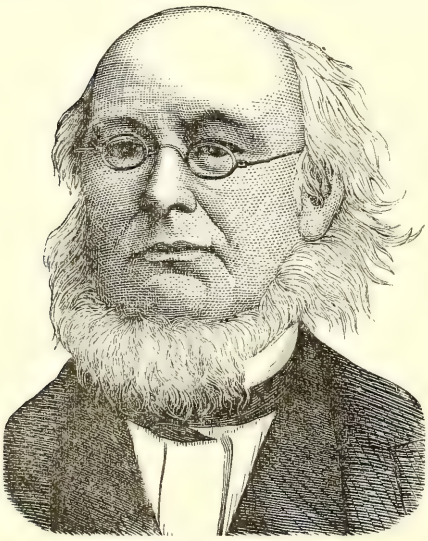


HARD CIDER TRIUMPHANT.

In May, 1840, there was received at Washington the initial number of the *The Log Cabin*, a campaign paper published at New York by Horace Greeley. It was printed at the office of the *New Yorker*, then edited by Mr. Greeley, on a thin super-royal sheet, and the price for twenty-eight weekly issues was fifty cents for a single copy—larger numbers much less. It contained a few illustrations bearing on the election, plans of General Harrison's battle-grounds, and campaign songs set to music.

Mr. Greeley's paper was recommended to leading Whigs at Washington by Thurlow Weed, and he obtained eighty thousand subscribers, the Whig Con-

gressmen recommending the paper to their constituents. The *Log Cabin* was the foundation of the *Tribune*, and thenceforth until his death Mr. Greeley was well known at the National Capital. He was a man of intense convictions and indomitable industry, and he wielded an incisive, ready pen, which went straight to the point without circumlocution or needless use of words. Although he was a somewhat erratic champion of Fourierism, vegetarianism, temperance, anti-hanging, and abolition, there was a "method in his madness," and his heretical views were evidently the honest convictions of his heart. Often egotistical, dogmatic, and personal, no one could question his uprightness and thorough devotion to the noblest principles of progressive civilization. Inspired by that true philanthropy that loves all mankind equally and every one of his neighbors better than himself, he was often victimized by those whose stories he believed and to whom he loaned his hard-earned savings. The breath of slander did not sully his reputation, and he never engaged in lobbying at Washington for money, although friendship several times prompted him to advocate appropriations for questional jobs —the renewal of patents which were monopolies, and



HORACE GREELEY.

the election of Public Printers who were notoriously corrupt.

Mr. Clay "sulked in his tent" until August, when he went to Nashville and addressed a Whig Convention. "Look," said he, in conclusion, "at the position of Tennessee and Kentucky. They stood side by side, their sons fought side by side, at New Orleans. Kentuckians and Tennesseeans now fight another and a different kind of battle. But they are fighting now, as then, a band of mercenaries, the cohorts of power. They are fighting a band of office-holders, who call General Harrison a coward, an imbecile, an old woman!

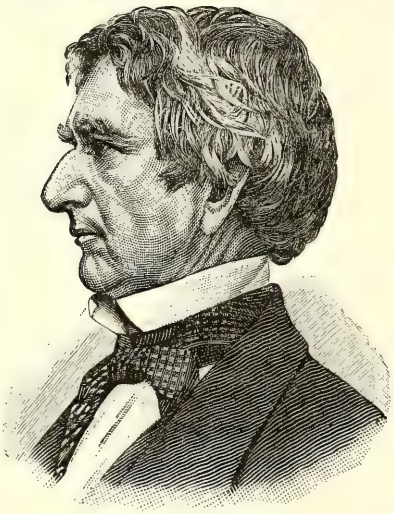
"Yes, General Harrison is called a coward, but he fought more battles than any other General during the last war and never sustained a defeat. He is no statesman, and yet he has filled more civil offices of trust and importance than almost any other man in the Union."

A man in the crowd here cried out, "Tell us of Van Buren's battles!"

"Ah!" said Mr. Clay, "I will have to use my colleague's language and tell you of Mr. Van Buren's '*three* great battles!' He says, that he fought General Commerce and conquered him; that he fought General Currency and conquered him, and that, with his Cuban allies, he fought the Seminoles and got conquered!"

Mr. Kendall came to the aid of President Van Buren, and resigned the office of Postmaster-General that he might sustain the Administration with his powerful pen. He thus brought upon himself much malignant abuse, but in the many newspaper controversies in which he was engaged he never failed to vindicate himself and overwhelm his assailant with a clearness and vigor of argument and a power of style with which few pens

could cope. He was not only assailed with the rudest violence of newspaper denunciation, but he was alluded to by Whig speakers in scornful terms, while caricaturists represented him as the Mephistopheles of the Van Buren Administration, and Log Cabin Clubs roared offensive campaign songs at midnight before his house, terrifying his children by the discharges of a small cannon. Defeat stared him in the face, but he never quailed, but faced the storm of attack in every direction, and zealously defended the Democratic banner.



WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

The Whigs of Maine led off by electing Edward Kent Governor, and five of her eight Congressmen, including William Pitt Fessenden and Elisha H. Allen, who afterward, when Minister from the Sandwich Islands to the United States, fell dead at a New Year's reception at the White House. Delaware, Maryland, and Georgia soon afterward followed suit, electing Whig Congressmen and State officers. In October the Ohio Whigs elected Thomas Corwin Governor, by a majority of nearly twenty thousand over Wilson Shannon, and it was evident that the triumphant election of Harrison and Tyler was inevitable. In New York William H. Seward was re-elected Governor, but he ran over seven thousand votes behind General Harrison, owing to certain local issues.

For some months before the election the Democrats mysteriously intimated that at the last moment some powerful engine was to be put into operation against the Whig cause. Mr. Van Buren himself was reported as having assured an intimate friend, who condoled with him on his gloomy prospects, that he "had a card to play yet which neither party dreamed of." The Attorney-General and the District Attorneys of New York and Philadelphia were as mysterious as Delphic oracles, while other Federal officers in those cities were profound and significant in their head-shakings and winks in reference to disclosures which were to be made just before the Presidential election, and which were to blow the Whigs "sky-high."

At last the magazine was exploded with due regard to dramatic effect. Carefully prepared statements, supported by affidavits, were simultaneously published in different parts of the country, showing that a man named Glentworth had been employed by some leading New York Whigs in 1838 to procure illegal votes from Philadelphia. The men were ostensibly engaged in laying pipe for the introduction of Croton water.

Messrs. Grinnell, Blatchford, Wetmore, Draper, and other leading New York Whigs implicated promptly published affidavits denying that they had ever employed Glentworth to supply New York with Whig voters from Philadelphia. It was proven, however, that he had received money and had taken some thirty Philadelphians to New York the day before the election. There was no evidence, however, that more than one of them had voted, and the only effect of the disclosure was to add the word "pipe-laying" to the political vocabulary.

The Whigs fought the battle to the end with confi-

dence of success, and displayed an enthusiasm and harmony never witnessed in this country before or since. Commencing with the harmonious selection of General Harrison as their candidate, they enlisted Clay and Webster, his defeated rivals, in his support, and, having taken the lead, they kept it right through, really defeating the Democrats in advance of the campaign. The South were not satisfied with Mr. Van Buren's attitude on the admission of Texas, which stood knocking for admission at the door of the Union, and "the Northern man with Southern principles" was not the recipient of many Southern votes:

> "Then hurrah for the field where the bald eagle flew,
> In pride o'er the hero of Tippecanoe!"

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THOMAS CORWIN was born in Bourbon County, Kentucky, July 29th, 1794; was a Representative in Congress from Ohio from December 5th, 1831, to 1840, when he resigned and was elected Governor of Ohio; was defeated for Governor of Ohio in 1842; was a Senator from Ohio from December 1st, 1845, to July 22d, 1850, when he resigned, having been appointed Secretary of the Treasury by President Taylor, and served until March 3d, 1853; was again a Representative in Congress from Ohio, December 5th, 1859, to March 3d, 1861; was Minister to Mexico, March 22d, 1861, to September 1st, 1864; died suddenly at Washington City, December 18th, 1865.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### ENTER WHIGS—EXIT DEMOCRATS.

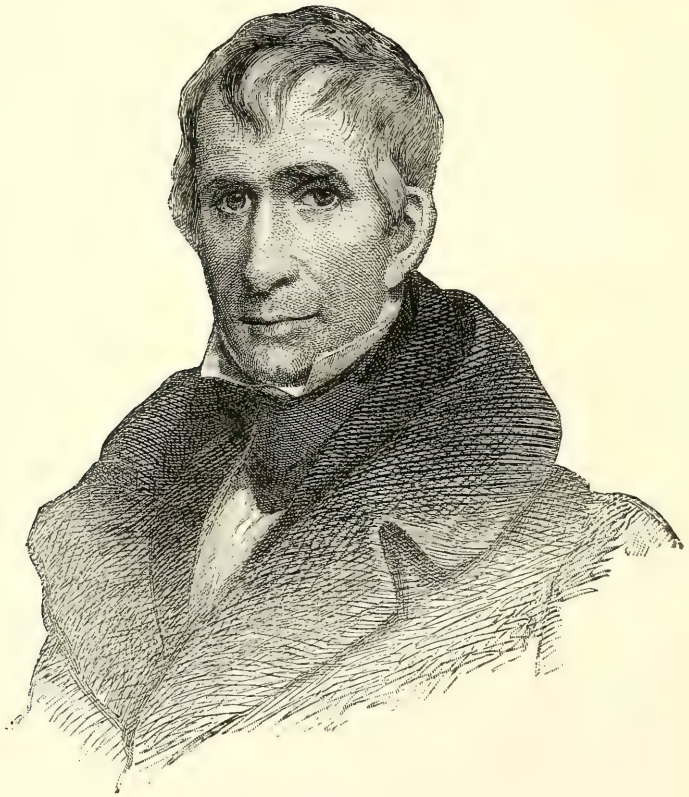
THE FOURTEENTH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION—ENTER HARRISON—EXIT VAN BUREN—HARRISON'S CABINET—ATTACK UPON MR. WEBSTER—"THE SALT BOILER OF THE KANAWHA"—OTHER CABINET OFFICERS—HARRISON'S INAUGURAL MESSAGE—THE INAUGURATION—THE PROCESSION—SCENES AT THE CAPITOL—THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS—PRESIDENT HARRISON'S FIRST RECEPTION—INAUGURATION BALLS.

IN 1840 many of the States voted for Presidential electors on different days, which rendered the contest more exciting as it approached its close. There was no telegraphic communication, and there were but few lines of railroad, so that it was some time after a large State had voted before its complete and correct returns could be received. At last all the back townships had been heard from and the exultant Whigs were certain that they had elected their candidates by a popular majority of over one hundred thousand! Twenty States had given Harrison and Tyler two hundred and thirty-four electoral votes, while Van Buren and Johnson had received but sixty electoral votes in six States. The log cabins were the scenes of great rejoicing over this unparalleled political victory, and the jubilant Whigs sang louder than before:

"Van, Van, Van is a used-up man."

General William Henry Harrison was by birth and education a Virginian. His father, Benjamin Harri-

son, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was the largest man in the old Congress of the Confederation, and when John Hancock was elected President of that body Harrison seized him and bore him in his



WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON.

arms to the chair. On reaching manhood William Henry Harrison migrated to Ohio, then the far West, and for forty years was prominently identified with the interests, the perils, and the hopes of that region. Universally beloved in the walks of peace, and some-

what distinguished by the ability with which he had discharged the duties of a succession of offices which he had filled, yet he won his greatest renown in military service. But he had never abjured the political doctrines of the Old Dominion, and his published letters and speeches during the Presidential campaign which resulted in his election showed that he was a believer in what the Virginians called a strict construction of financial questions, internal improvements, the veto power, and the protection of negro slavery. His intel-



CITY HALL, WASHINGTON.

lect was enriched with classical reminiscences, which he was fond of quoting in writing or in conversation. When he left his residence on the bank of the Ohio for the seat of Government he compared his progress to the return of Cicero to Rome, congratulated and cheered as he passed on by the victorious Cato and his admiring countrymen.

On General Harrison's arrival at Washington, on a stormy afternoon in February, 1841, he walked from the railroad station (then on Pennsylvania Avenue) to the City Hall. He was a tall, thin, careworn old

gentleman, with a martial bearing, carrying his hat in his hand, and bowing his acknowledgments for the cheers with which he was greeted by the citizens who lined the sidewalks. On reaching the City Hall the President-elect was formally addressed by the Mayor, Colonel W. W. Seaton, of the *National Intelligencer*, who supplemented his panegyric by a complimentary editorial article in his newspaper of the next morning.



ASHLAND.

Before coming East General Harrison visited Henry Clay, at Ashland, and tendered him the position of Secretary of State, which Mr. Clay promptly declined, saying that he had fully determined not to hold office under the new Administration, although he intended cordially to support it. General Harrison thanked Mr. Clay for his frankness, expressing deep regret that he could not accept the portfolio of the Department of State. He further said that if Mr. Clay

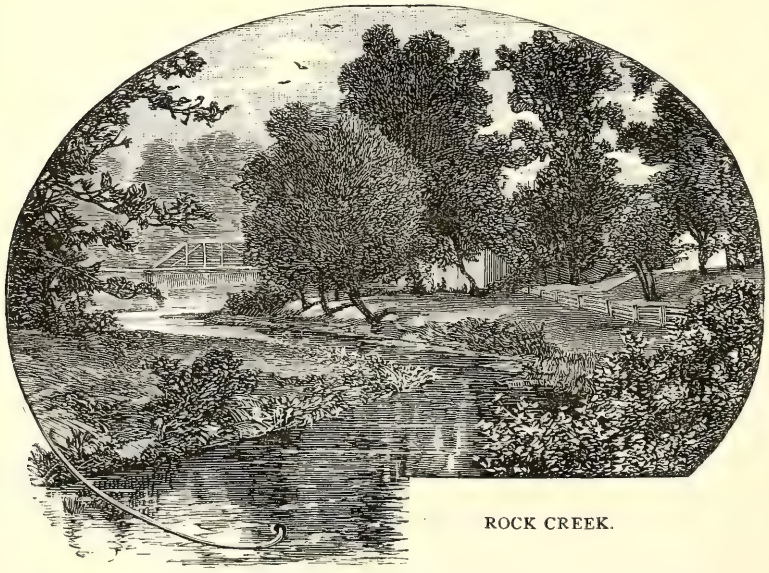
had accepted this position it was his intention to offer the portfolio of the Treasury Department to Mr. Webster; but since Mr. Clay had declined a seat in the Cabinet, he should not offer one to Mr. Webster.

Mr. Clay objected to this conclusion, and remarked that while Mr. Webster was not peculiarly fitted for the control of the national finances, he was eminently qualified for the management of the foreign relations. Besides, the appointment of Mr. Webster as Secretary of State would inspire confidence in the Administration abroad, which would be highly important, considering the existing critical relations with Great Britain. General Harrison accepted the suggestion, and on his return to North Bend wrote to Mr. Webster, offering him the Department of State and asking his advice concerning the other members of the Cabinet. The "solid men of Boston," who had begun to entertain grave apprehensions of hostilities with Great Britain, urged Mr. Webster to accept, and pledged themselves to contribute liberally to his support.

No sooner was it intimated that Mr. Webster was to be the Premier of the incoming Administration than the Calhoun wing of the Democratic party denounced him as having countenanced the abolition of slavery, and when his letter resigning his seat in the Senate was read in that body, Senator Cuthbert, of Georgia, attacked him. The Georgian's declamation was delivered with clenched fist; he pounded his desk, gritted his teeth, and used profane language. Messrs. Clay, Preston, and other Senators defended Mr. Webster from the attack of the irate Georgian, and his friends had printed at Washington a large edition of a speech which he had made a few months before on the portico of the Capitol at Richmond before a vast assemblage.

"Beneath the light of an October sun, I say," he then declared, "there is no power, directly or indirectly, in Congress or the General Government, to interfere in the slightest degree with the institutions of the South."

General Harrison, to quiet the cry of "Abolitionist," which had been raised against him as well as Mr. Webster, made a visit to Richmond prior to his inauguration, during which he availed himself of every pos-



ROCK CREEK.

sible occasion to assert his devotion to the rights, privileges, and prejudices of the South concerning the existence of slavery. On his return he took a daily ride on the picturesque banks of Rock Creek, rehearsing portions of his inaugural address.

The portfolio of the Treasury Department was given to Thomas Ewing, of Ohio (familiarly known from his early avocation as "the Salt Boiler of the Kanawha"), who was physically and intellectually a great man. He

was of medium height, very portly, his ruddy complexion setting off his bright, laughing eyes to the best advantage. On "the stump" he had but few equals, as in simple language and without apparent oratorical effort he breathed his own spirit into vast audiences, and swayed them with resistless power. He resided in a house built by Count de Menou, one of the French Legation, and his daughter Ellen, now the wife of General Sherman, attended school at the academy attached to the Convent of the Sisters of the Visitation, in Georgetown.

The coming Secretary of War was John Bell, of Tennessee, a courtly Jackson Democrat in years past, who had preferred to support Hugh L. White rather than Martin Van Buren, and had thus drifted into the Whig ranks. He had served as a Representative in Congress since 1827, officiating during one term as Speaker, and he was personally very popular.

For Secretary of the Navy George E. Badger, of North Carolina, was selected. He had been graduated from Yale College, but had never held other than local offices. His sailor-like figure and facetious physiognomy were very appropriate for the position, and he soon became a decided favorite at the Washington "messes," where he was always ready to contribute freely from his fund of anecdotes.

Francis Granger, of New York, who was to be Postmaster-General, was also a graduate of Yale College. He had been a member of the New York State Legislature and of Congress, and the unsuccessful Whig candidate for Vice-President in 1836. He was a genial, rosy-faced gentleman, whose "silver gray" hair afterward gave its name to the party in New York which recognized him as its leader.

The Attorney-General was J. J. Crittenden, a Kentuckian, whose intellectual vigor, integrity of character, and legal ability had secured for him a nomination to the bench of the Supreme Court by President Adams, which, however, the Democratic Senate failed to confirm. Kept in the shade by Henry Clay, he became somewhat crabbed, but his was one of the noblest intellects of his generation. His persuasive eloquence, his sound judgment, his knowledge of the law, his lucid manner of stating facts, and his complete grasp of every case which he examined had made him a power in the Senate and in the Supreme Court, as he was destined to be in the Cabinet.

The inaugural message had been prepared by General Harrison in Ohio, and he brought it with him to Washington, written in his large hand on one side of sheets of foolscap paper. When it was submitted to Mr. Webster, he respectfully suggested the propriety of abridging it, and of striking from it some of the many classical allusions and quotations with which it abounded. He found, however, that General Harrison was not disposed to receive advice, and that he was reluctant to part with any evidence of his classic scholarship. Colonel Seaton used to relate with great gusto how Mr. Webster once came late to a dinner party at his house, and said, as he entered the dining-room, when the soup was being served: "Excuse my tardiness, but I have been able to dispose of two Roman Emperors and a pro-Consul, which should be a sufficient excuse."

General Harrison was inaugurated on Thursday, March 4th, 1841. The city had filled up during the preceding night, and the roar of the morning salutes was echoed by the bands of the military as they

marched to take their designated places. The sun was obscured, but the weather was mild, and the streets were perfectly dry. At ten o'clock a procession was formed, which escorted the President-elect from his temporary residence, by way of Pennsylvania Avenue, to the Capitol. No regular troops were on parade, but the uniformed militia of the District of Columbia, reinforced by others from Philadelphia and Baltimore, performed escort duty in a very creditable manner. A carriage presented by the Whigs of Baltimore, and drawn by four horses, had been provided for the President-elect, but he preferred to ride on horseback, as the Roman Emperors were wont to pass along the Appian Way. The old hero made a fine appearance, mounted, as he was, on a spirited white charger. At his right, slightly in the rear, rode Major Hurst, who had been his aid-de-camp at the Battle of the Thames; at his left, in a similar position, rode Colonel Todd, another aid-de-camp at the same battle. An escort of assistant marshals, finely mounted, followed. Although the weather was chilly, the General refused to wear an overcoat, and he rode with his hat in his hand, gracefully bowing acknowledgments of cheers from the multitudes on the sidewalks, and of the waving of white handkerchiefs by ladies at the windows on either side.

Behind the President-elect came Tippecanoe Clubs and other political associations, with music, banners, and badges. The Club from Prince George County, Maryland, had in its ranks a large platform on wheels, drawn by six white horses, on which was a power-loom from the Laurel Factory, with operatives at work. Several of the clubs drew large log cabins on wheels, decked with suitable inscriptions, cider-barrels, 'coon-skins, and other frontier articles. A feature of the

procession was the students of the Jesuits' College at Georgetown, who appeared in uniform, headed by their faculty, and carrying a beautiful banner.

An immense crowd had gathered at the Capitol, and at ten o'clock ladies who had tickets were admitted into the gallery of the Senate Chamber, and were provided



COLLEGE OF GEORGETOWN.

with comfortable seats. The east door leading to the Senate gallery was soon opened, when at least five thousand persons rushed to that point. Less than a thousand were enabled to reach the seats provided. Soon after the galleries were filled, the foreign Ambassadors, wearing the court dresses and insignia, were introduced on the floor. The members of the Senate

took their seats, after which the Senate was called to order by the Clerk, and Senator King was chosen President *pro tem.* The newly elected Senators were sworn. Vice-President Tyler, of Virginia, entered arm-in-arm with ex-Vice-President Johnson, and after the oath of office had been administered to him he took the chair and called the Senate to order.

The President-elect was then ushered into the Senate Chamber by the Committee, of which Mr. Preston was chairman. The Judges of the Supreme Court, wearing their black silk robes, had taken their seats in front, below the Speaker's chair. The President-elect shook hands cordially with a number of the Senators and Judges, and appeared much younger than many who were his juniors in years.

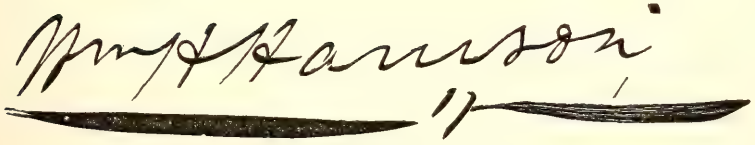
At half-past twelve o'clock the signal was given, and the officers in the Senate Chamber formed in procession and proceeded to the eastern front of the Capitol, where there was a platform some fifteen feet high and large enough to accommodate an immense crowd. The President-elect took his seat in front, Chief Justice Taney and his associates by his side, the Senators and Ambassadors on the left, and the ladies at the sides. The large area below was filled with an immense multtiude of probably not less than from forty to fifty thousand persons. General Harrison, as "the observed of all observers," was greeted with prolonged cheers when he rose to deliver his address. When the uproar had subsided he advanced to the front of the platform, and there was profound stillness as he read, in a loud and clear voice, his inaugural address. He stood bareheaded, without overcoat or gloves, facing the cold northeast wind, while those seated on the platform around him, although warmly wrapped, suffered from

the piercing blasts. All were astonished at the power and compass of his voice. He spoke until two P. M.—one and a half hours—with a clearness that was truly surprising. So distinctly were his words heard that he was cheered at the closing of every sentiment, particularly where he said that he would carry out the pledge that he had made, that under no circumstances would he run for another term. Just before the close of the inaugural he turned to Chief Justice Taney, who held the Bible, and in a clear and distinct voice repeated the oath required. It was a singular fact that when the President took the oath this multitude of spectators before him spontaneously uncovered their heads, while the pealing cannon announced to the country that it had a new Chief Magistrate. As soon as the ceremony was over the immense concourse turned their faces from the Capitol, and filed down the various walks to Pennsylvania Avenue. The procession formed anew and marched to the White House, cheered as it passed by the waiting crowds.

Entering the White House, President Harrison took his station in the reception-room, and the multitude entered the front portal, passed through the vestibule into the reception-room, where they had an opportunity to shake hands with the President, then passed down the rear steps and out through the garden. At night there were three inauguration balls, the prices of admission suiting different pockets. At one, where the tickets were ten dollars for gentlemen, the ladies being invited guests, there was a representation from almost every State in the Union. President Harrison, notwithstanding the fatigues of the day, remained over an hour, and was attended by several members of his Cabinet. Mr. Webster was in excellent spirits, and

chatted familiarly with Mr. Clay at the punch-bowl, where libations were drank to the success of the new Administration.

Thus the new Administration was inaugurated. The Democrats surrendered the power which they had so despotically wielded for twelve years, and their opponents, consolidated under the Whig banner, took the reins of government. Passing over Webster and Clay, their recognized leaders, they had elected Harrison as a more available candidate, he having been a gallant soldier and having but few enemies. For Vice-President they had elected John Tyler, for the sole reason that his Democratic affiliations would secure the electoral vote of Virginia.



WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON was born in Charles County, Virginia, February 9th, 1773; was Delegate in Congress from the Northwest Territory, December 2d, 1790, to March, 1800; was Governor of Indiana, 1801–1813; was a Representative in Congress from Ohio, December 2d, 1816, to March 3d, 1819; was United States Senator, December 5th, 1825, to May 20th, 1828; was Minister to Colombia, May 24th, 1828, to September 26th, 1829; became President of the United States, March 4th, 1841, and died at Washington City, April 4th, 1841.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### HARRISON'S ONE MONTH OF POWER.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM—DIFFERENCES OF OPINION—DIFFICULTY BETWEEN CLAY AND KING—WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS—VERBATIM REPORTS OF DEBATES—A POPULAR BRITISH MINISTER—OTHER FOREIGN DIPLOMATS—QUARRELSOME CAROLINIANS—DANIEL WEBSTER'S HOUSEKEEPING—ILLNESS OF PRESIDENT HARRISON—DEATH—FUNERAL—THE LAST HONORS.

GOVERNMENT officials at Washington, nearly all of whom had received their positions as rewards for political services, and many of whom had displaced worthy men whose only fault was that they belonged to a different party, were somewhat encouraged by the declarations of President Harrison touching the position of office-holders. It was known from a speech of his at Baltimore, prior to his inauguration, that he intended to protect the right of individual opinion from official interference, and in a few days after he became President his celebrated civil-service circular was issued by Daniel Webster, as Secretary of State. It was addressed to the heads of the Executive Departments, and it commenced thus:

"SIR:—The President is of opinion that it is a great abuse to bring the patronage of the General Government into conflict with the freedom of elections; and that this abuse ought to be corrected wherever it may have been permitted to exist, and to be prevented for the future."

It would have been fortunate for the country if these views of President Harrison, so clearly stated by Daniel Webster in this circular, could have been honestly carried out; but the horde of hungry politicians that had congregated at Washington, with racoon-tails in their hats and packages of recommendations in their pockets, clamored for the wholesale action of the political guillotine, that they might fill the vacancies thereby created. Whigs and Federalists, National Republicans and strict constructionists, bank and anti-bank men had coalesced under the motto of "Union of the Whigs for the sake of the Union," but they had really united "for the sake of office." The Administration found itself forced to make removals that places might be found for this hungry horde, and to disregard its high position on civil service. Virginia was especially clamorous for places, and Vice-President Tyler became the champion of hundreds who belonged to the first families, but who were impecunious.



JOHN J. CRITTENDEN.

Direct conflict soon arose between the President and his Cabinet, he asserting his right to make appoint

ments and removals, while they took the ground that it was simply his duty to take such action as they chose to dictate. The Cabinet were sustained by the opinion of Attorney-General John J. Crittenden, and they also under his advice claimed the right to review the President's nominations before they were sent to the Senate. To the President, who had as Governor and as General been in the habit of exercising autocratic command, these attempts to hamper his action were very annoying, and at times he "kicked over the traces."

One day, after a rather stormy Cabinet meeting, Mr. Webster asked the President to appoint one of his political supporters, General James Wilson, of New Hampshire, Governor of the Territory of Iowa. President Harrison replied that it would give him pleasure to do so had he not promised the place to Colonel John Chambers, of Kentucky, his former aid-de-camp, who had been acting as his private secretary. The next day Colonel Chambers had occasion to visit the Department of State, and Mr. Webster asked him if the President had offered to appoint him Governor of Iowa. "Yes, sir," was the reply. "Well, sir," said Mr. Webster, with sour sternness, a cloud gathering on his massive brow, while his unfathomable eyes glowed with anger, "you must not take that position, for I have promised it to my friend, General Wilson." Colonel Chambers, who had been a member of Congress, and was older than Mr. Webster, was not intimidated, but replied, "Mr. Webster, I shall accept the place, and I tell you, sir, not to undertake to dragoon me!" He then left the room, and not long afterward Mr. Webster received from the President a peremptory order to commission John Chambers, of Kentucky, as Governor of the Territory of Iowa, which was complied with.

Mr. Clay undertook to insist upon some removals, that personal friends of his might be appointed to the offices thus vacated, and he used such dictatorial language that after he had left the White House President Harrison wrote him a formal note, requesting that he would make any further suggestions he might desire to submit in writing. Mr. Clay was very much annoyed, and Mr. King, of Alabama, making some remarks in the Senate soon afterward which might be construed as personally offensive, the great Commoner opened his batteries upon him, saying in conclusion that the assertions of the Senator from Alabama were "false, untrue, and cowardly."

Mr. King immediately rose and left the Senate Chamber. Mr. Levin, of Missouri, was called out, and soon returned, bringing a note, which he handed to Mr. Clay, who read it, and then handed it to Mr. Archer. Messrs. Levin and Archer immediately engaged in an earnest conversation, and it was soon known that a challenge had passed, and they as seconds were endeavoring amicably to arrange the affair. After four days of negotiation, Mr. Preston, of South Carolina, and other Senators, acting as mediators, the affair was honorably adjusted. Mr. King withdrew his challenge, Mr. Clay declared every epithet derogatory to the honor of the Senator from Alabama to be withdrawn, and Mr. Preston expressed his satisfaction at the happy termination of the misunderstanding between the Senators. While Mr. Preston was speaking Mr. Clay rose, walked to the opposite side of the Senate Chamber, and stopping in front of the desk of the Senator from Alabama, said, in a pleasant tone, "King, give us a pinch of your snuff?" Mr. King, springing to his feet, held out his hand, which was grasped by Mr. Clay and cordially

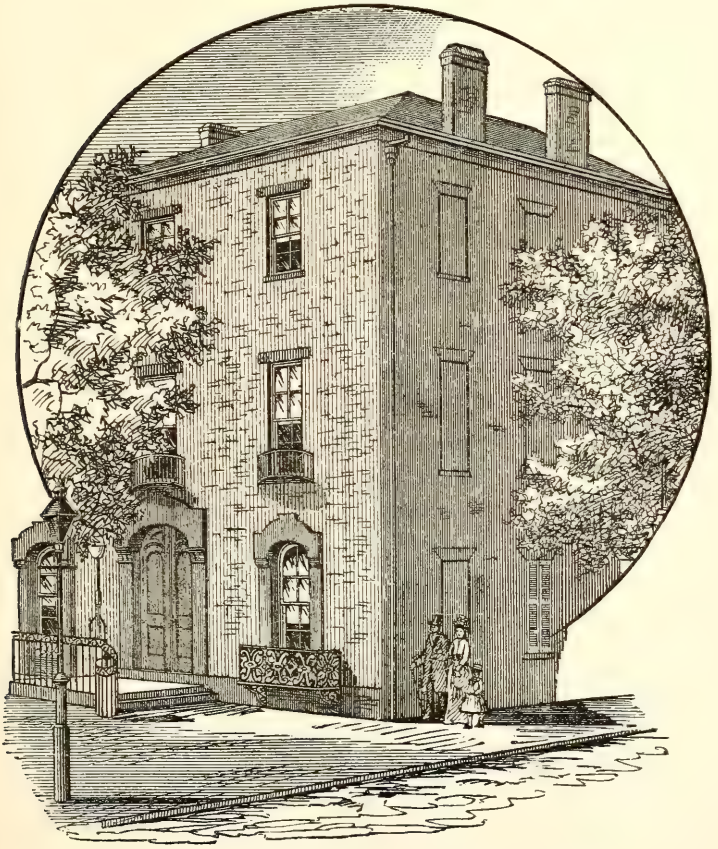
shaken, the Senators and spectators applauding this pacific demonstration.

The leading Washington correspondent at that time was Dr. Francis Bacon, brother of the Rev. Dr. Leonard Bacon, of New Haven, Connecticut. He wrote for the New York *American*, then edited by Charles King, signing his articles R. M. T. H.—Regular Member Third House. Dr. Bacon wielded a powerful pen, and when he chose so to do could condense a column of denunciation, satire, and sarcasm into a single paragraph. He was a fine scholar, fearless censor, and terse writer, giving his many readers a clear idea of what was transpiring at the Federal metropolis.

A new-comer among the correspondents during the Harrison Administration was Mr. Nathan Sargent, whose correspondence to the Philadelphia *United States Gazette*, over the signature of "Oliver Oldschool," soon became noted. His carefully written letters gave a continuous narrative of important events as they occurred, and he was one who aided in making the Whig party, like the Federal party, which had preceded it, eminently respectable.

Washington correspondents, up to this time, had been the mediums through which a large portion of the citizens of the United States obtained their information concerning national affairs. The only reports of the debates in Congress appeared in the Washington newspapers often several weeks after their delivery. James Gordon Bennett, who had then become proprietor of the New York *Herald*, after publishing President Harrison's call for an extra session of Congress in advance of his contemporaries, determined to have the proceedings and debates reported for and promptly published in his own columns. To superintend the reporting, he

engaged Robert Sutton, who organized a corps of phonographers, which was the nucleus of the present able body of official reporters of the debates. Sutton was a



DECATUR MANSION, THE BRITISH LEGATION.

short, stout, pragmatical Englishman, whose desire to obtain extra allowances prompted him to revise, correct, and polish up reports which should have been verbatim,

and thus to take the initiative in depriving official reports of debates of a large share of their value. Since then, Senators and Representatives address their constituents through the reports, instead of debating questions among themselves.

The diplomatic representative of Great Britain, during the greater part of the Jackson Administration was the Right Honorable Charles Richard Vaughan, who was a great favorite among Congressmen and citizens at Washington, many of whom were his guests at the Decatur Mansion, then the British Legation. He was a well-educated and well-informed gentleman with the courteous manners of the old school. When recalled after ten years' service at Washington, he was a jovial bachelor of fifty, fond of old Madeira wine and a quiet rubber of whist.

A good story is told of General Roger Weightman, when Mayor of the city, who sent by mistake an invitation to Sir Charles Vaughan to attend a Fourth-of-July dinner, at which speeches were invariably made abusive of the British and their Vandalism in the recent war. Sir Charles, who was a finished diplomat, might have construed the invitation into an insult, but he wrote a very polite response, saying that he thought he should be "indisposed" on the Fourth of July.

Russia was then represented by the Baron de Krudener, who resided in a large house built by Thomas Swann, a wealthy Baltimorean. Amicable relations with "our ancient ally," France, had been interrupted by the brusque demand of General Jackson for the payment of the indemnity. Monsieur Serruvier was recalled, leaving the Legation in charge of Alphonso Pageot, the Secretary. He also was recalled, but after the Jackson Administration was sent back as Chargé.

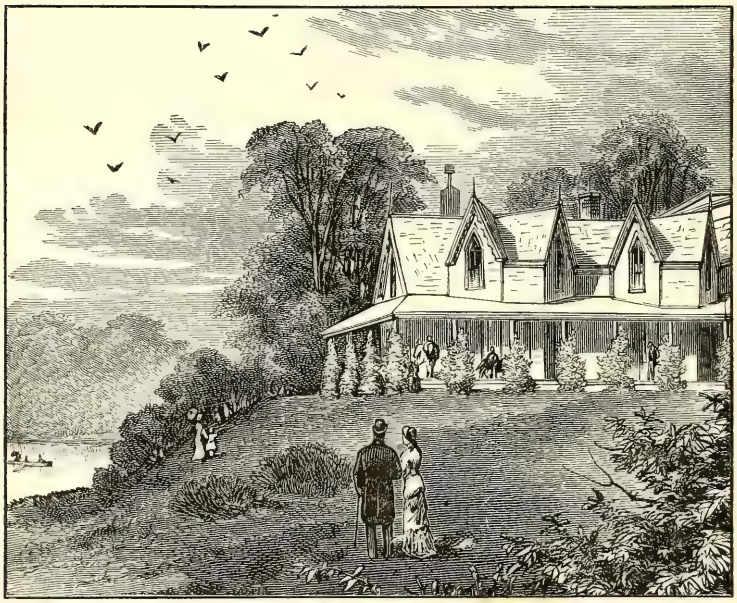
It was expected that the session of the Twenty-sixth Congress, which terminated on the day of the inauguration of General Harrison, would have been followed by a duel between Mr. Edward Stanley, of North Carolina, and Mr. Francis W. Pickens, of South Carolina. Mr. Stanley had been criticised in debate by Mr. Pickens, and he retorted mercilessly. "The gentleman," said he, "compares my speech to the attempt of a 'savage shooting at the sun.' It may be so, sir. But the Committee will remember that in the remarks I made I did not address myself to the gentleman who has so unnecessarily interposed in this debate. And why did I not, sir? Not because I thought I should be as powerless as he describes me, but because I had seen him so often so unmercifully kicked and cuffed and knocked about, so often run over on this floor, that I thought he was beneath my notice, and utterly insignificant. Sir, the gentleman says he is reminded by my speech of the 'nursery rhyme,'

> 'Who shot Cock Robin?
> "I," said the Sparrow,
> "With my bow and arrow,
> I shot Cock Robin."'

Well, sir, I am willing to be the sparrow for this cock robin, this chivalrous gentleman; and let me tell the gentleman, if he will not deem me vain, I feel fully able, with my bow and arrow, to run through a 'cow-pen full' of such cock robins as he is. In conclusion, I have only to say, sir, to the gentleman from South Carolina, that though my arm may be 'pigmy,' though I may be but a sparrow in the estimation of one 'born insensible to fear,' I am able, sir, anywhere, as a sparrow from North Carolina, to put down a dozen such cock robins as he is. 'Come one, come all,' ye South

Carolina cock robins, if you dare; I am ready for you." Mr. Pickens wrote a challenge, but friends interposed, and the difficulty was honorably arranged.

When Mr. Webster became Secretary of State, under President Harrison, his friends in Boston and New York raised a purse to enable him to purchase the Swann House, facing Lafayette Square. Mr. Webster



MARSHFIELD.

preferred, however, to purchase land at Marshfield, and after he had occupied the house during the negotiation of the Ashburton Treaty, the property passed into the hands of Mr. W. W. Corcoran, who has since resided there.

Mr. Webster was his own purveyor, and was a regular attendant at the Marsh Market on market mornings. He almost invariably wore a large, broad-

brimmed, soft felt hat, with his favorite blue coat and bright buttons, a buff cassimere waistcoat, and black trousers. Going from stall to stall, followed by a servant bearing a large basket in which purchases were carried home, he would joke with the butchers, fish-mongers, and green-grocers with a grave drollery of which his biographers, in their anxiety to deify him, have made no mention. He always liked to have a friend or two at his dinner-table, and in inviting them, *sans ceremonie*, he would say, in his deep, cheery voice, "Come and dine with me to-morrow. I purchased a noble saddle of Valley of Virginia mutton in market last week, and I think you will enjoy it." Or, "I received some fine cod-fish from Boston to-day, sir; will you dine with me at five o'clock and taste them?" Or, "I found a famous possum in market this morning, sir, and left orders with Monica, my cook, to have it baked in the real old Virginia style, with stuffing of chestnuts and surrounded by baked sweet potatoes. It will be a dish fit for the gods. Come and taste it."

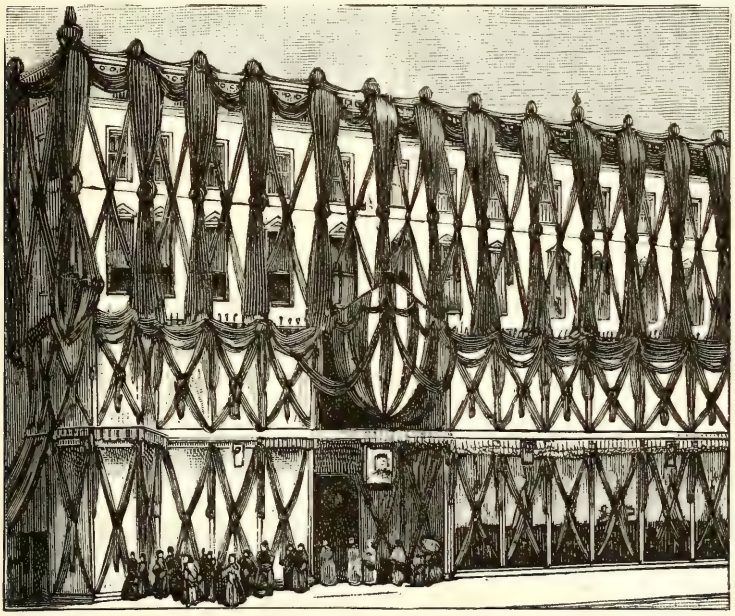
President Harrison, who was an early riser, used to go to market, and he invariably refused to wear an overcoat, although the spring was cold and stormy. One morning, having gone to the market thus thinly attired, he was overtaken by a slight shower and got wet, but refused to change his clothes. The following day he felt symptoms of indisposition, which were followed by pneumonia. At his Ohio home he had lived plainly and enjoyed sleep, but at Washington he had, while rising early, rarely retired before one o'clock in the morning, and his physical powers, enfeebled by age, had been overtaxed. At the same time, the President's mental powers had undergone a severe strain, as was evident when he became somewhat delirious. Some-

times he would say, "My dear madam, I did not direct that your husband should be turned out. I did not know it. I tried to prevent it." On other occasions he would say, in broken sentences, "It is wrong—I won't consent—'tis unjust." "These applications—will they never cease!" The last time that he spoke was about three hours before his death, when his physicians and attendants were standing over him. Clearing his throat, as if desiring to speak audibly, and as though he fancied himself addressing his successor, or some official associate in the Government, he said: "Sir, I wish you to understand the true principles of the Government. I wish them carried out. I ask nothing more."

"One little month" after President Harrison's inauguration multitudes again assembled to attend his funeral. Minute-guns were fired during the day, flags were displayed at half staff, and Washington was crowded with strangers at an early hour. The buildings on either side of Pennsylvania Avenue, with scarcely an exception, and many houses on the contiguous streets, were hung with festoons and streamers of black. Almost every private dwelling had crape upon its door, and many of the very humblest abodes displayed some spontaneous signal of the general sorrow. The stores and places of business, even such as were too frequently seen open on the Sabbath, were all closed.

Funeral services were performed in the Executive Mansion, which, for the first time, was shrouded in mourning. The coffin rested on a temporary catafalque in the centre of the East Room. It was covered with black velvet, trimmed with gold lace, and over it was thrown a velvet pall with a deep golden fringe. On

this lay the sword of Justice and the sword of State, surmounted by the scroll of the Constitution, bound together by a funeral wreath, formed of the yew and the cypress. Around the coffin stood in a circle the new President, John Tyler, the venerable ex-President, John Quincy Adams, Secretary Webster, and the other members of the Cabinet. The next circle contained



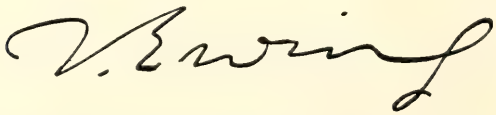
THE NATION IN MOURNING.

the Diplomatic Corps, in their richly decorated court-suits, with a number of members of both houses of Congress, and the relatives of the deceased President. Beyond this circle a vast assemblage of ladies and gentlemen filled up the room. Silence, deep and undisturbed, even by a whisper, prevailed. When, at the appointed hour, the officiating clergyman said, "I am the resurrection and the life," the entire audience rose,

and joined in the burial service of the Episcopal Church.

After the services the coffin was carried to a large funeral car drawn by six white horses, each having at its head a black groom dressed in white, with white turban and sash. Outside of the grooms walked the pall-bearers, dressed in black, with black scarves. The contrast made by this slowly moving body of white and black, so opposite to the strong colors of the military around it, struck the eye even from the greatest distance.

The funeral procession, with its military escort, was two miles in length, and eclipsed the inauguration pageant which had so recently preceded it. The remains were escorted to the Congressional Burying-Ground, where they were temporarily deposited in the receiving-vault, to be taken subsequently to the banks of the Ohio, and there placed in an unmarked and neglected grave. The troops present all fired three volleys in such a ludicrously straggling manner as to recall the dying request of Robert Burns that the awkward squad might not fire over his grave. Then the drums and fifes struck up merry strains, the military marched away, and only the scene of the public bereavement remained.



THOMAS EWING was born near West Liberty, Virginia, December 28th, 1789; was United States Senator from Ohio, December 5th, 1831, to March 3d, 1837; was Secretary of the Treasury under President Harrison, March 5th, 1841, to September 13th, 1841; was Secretary of the Interior under President Taylor, March 7th, 1849, to July 25th, 1850; was again Senator from Ohio, July 27th, 1850, to March 3d, 1851, and died at Lancaster, Ohio, October 26th, 1871.

## CHAPTER XX.

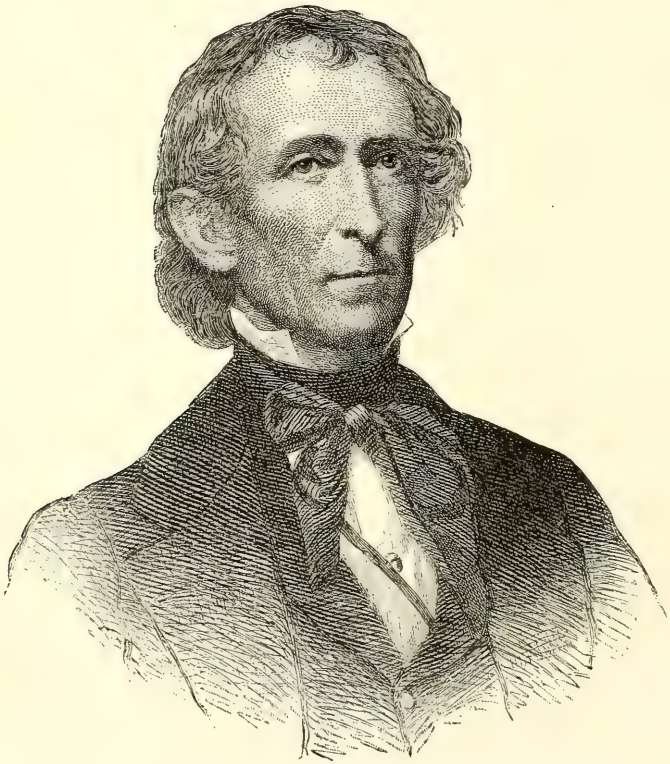
### THE KING IS DEAD—LONG LIVE THE KING.

"LE ROI EST MORT—VIVE LE ROI"—EXTRA SESSION OF CONGRESS—TROUBLE IN THE WHIG CAMP—EDWARD EVERETT BEFORE THE SENATE—THURLOW WEED—DISSENSIONS AMONG THE WHIGS—CABINET TROUBLES—CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISMS—CUSHING AND ADAMS, OF MASSACHUSETTS—WISE, OF VIRGINIA—BAGBY, OF ALABAMA.

JOHN TYLER, having found that his position as Vice-President gave him no voice in the distribution of patronage, had retired in disgust to his estate in Prince William County, Virginia, when Mr. Fletcher Webster brought him a notification, from the Secretary of State, to hasten to Washington to assume the duties of President. Mr. Webster reached Richmond on Sunday—the day following General Harrison's death—chartered a steamboat, and arrived at Mr. Tyler's residence on Monday at daybreak. Soon afterward, Mr. Tyler, accompanied by his two sons, left with Mr. Webster, and arrived at Washington early Tuesday morning.

The Cabinet had arrived at the conclusion that Mr. Tyler should be officially styled, "Vice-President of the United States, acting President," but he very promptly determined that he would enjoy all of the dignities and honors of the office which he had inherited under the Constitution. Chief Justice Taney was then absent, so Mr. Tyler summoned Chief Justice Cranch, of the Supreme Court of the District of Col-

umbia, to his parlor at Brown's Indian Queen Hotel, and took the oath of office administered to preceding Presidents. The Cabinet officers were soon made to understand that he was Chief Magistrate of the Repub-

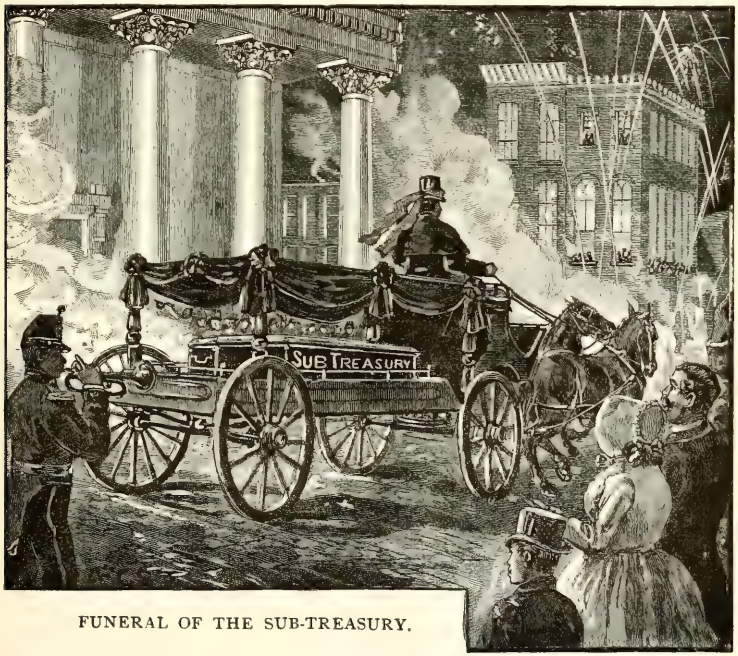


JOHN TYLER.

lic, and the Whig magnates began to fear that their lease of power would soon terminate. In conversation with Mr. Nathan Sargent, a prominent Whig correspondent, soon after his arrival, Mr. Tyler significantly remarked: "If the Democrats and myself ever come

together, they must come to me; I shall never go to them." This showed that he regarded his connection with the Whigs as precarious.

The extra session of Congress, which had been convened by General Harrison before his death, was not acceptable to his successor, who saw that its legislation would be inspired and controlled by Henry Clay.




FUNERAL OF THE SUB-TREASURY.

When the two houses were organized, he sent them a brief message, in which the national bank question was dexterously handled, "with the caution and ambiguity of a Talleyrand." Mr. Clay lost no time in presenting his programme for Congressional action; and in a few days its first feature, the repeal of the sub-Treasury Act, was enacted. That night a thousand or more of the jubilant Washington Whigs marched in

procession from Capitol Hill to the White House, with torches, music, transparencies, and fireworks, escorting a catafalque on which was a coffin labeled, "The sub-Treasury." As the procession moved slowly along Pennsylvania Avenue, bonfires were kindled at the intersecting streets, many houses were illuminated, and there was general rejoicing. On the arrival of the procession at the Executive Mansion, President Tyler came out and made a few remarks, while Mr. Webster and the other members of the Cabinet bowed their thanks for the cheers given them. The hilarious crowd of mock-mourners then repaired to the house of Mrs. Brown, at the corner of Seventh and D Streets, where Mr. Clay boarded, and received his grateful acknowledgments for the demonstration. The next measure on Mr. Clay's programme, the bill for the distribution of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands among the States, was also promptly enacted and as promptly approved by the President. Next came the National Bankrupt Act, which was stoutly opposed by the Democrats, but it finally passed, and was approved by Mr. Tyler.

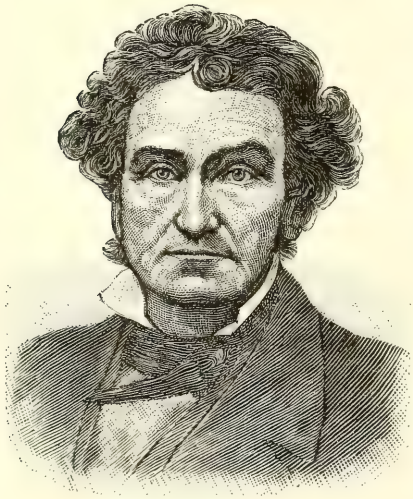
When Congress enacted a bill creating a National Bank, however, and sent it to the President for his approval, he returned it with his veto. This created much discontent among the Whigs, while the Democrats were so rejoiced that a considerable number of their Congressmen called at the Executive Mansion. The President received them cordially, and treated them to champagne, in which toasts were drunk not very complimentary to the Whig party, or to its leader, Mr. Clay. The Kentucky Senator soon saw that it was of no use to temporize with his vacillating chieftain, who evidently desired to become his own suc-

cessor, so he determined to force the Administration into a hostile attitude toward the Whigs, while he himself should step to the front as their recognized leader. Haughty and imperious, Mr. Clay was nevertheless so fascinating in his manner when he chose to be that he held unlimited control over nearly every member of the party. He remembered, too, that Tyler had been nominated for Vice-President in pursuance of a bargain made by Clay's own friends in the Legislature of Virginia, where they had joined the Van Buren members in electing Mr. Rives to the Senate. This bargain Mr. Clay had hoped would secure for him the support of the State of Virginia in the nominating convention, and although Harrison received the nomination for President, Clay's friends were none the less responsible for the nomination of Tyler as Vice-President. He was consequently very angry when he learned what had taken place at the White House, and he availed himself of the first opportunity to speak of the scene in the Senate, portraying the principal personages present with adroit sarcasm.

Some of his descriptions were life-like, especially that of Mr. Calhoun, "tall, careworn, with fevered brow, haggard cheek, and eye intensely gazing, looking as if he were dissecting the last and newest abstraction which sprung from some metaphysician's brain, and muttering to himself, in half uttered words, 'This is indeed a crisis!'" The best word-portrait, however, was that of Senator Buchanan, whose manner and voice were humorously imitated while he was described as presenting his Democratic associates to the President. Mr. Buchanan pleasantly retorted, describing in turn a caucus of disappointed Whig Congressmen, who discussed whether it would be best to make

open war upon "Captain Tyler," or to resort to strategem, and, in the elegant language of Mr. Botts, "head him, or die."

The mission to Great Britain had been tendered by President Harrison to John Sargent, a distinguished Philadelphia lawyer, who had been the candidate for Vice-President on the unsuccessful Whig ticket headed by Henry Clay in 1836. Mr. Sargent having declined, President Harrison had appointed Edward Everett, of Massachusetts, who accepted, and his name came before the Senate for confirmation. Mr. Everett was among the most conservative of New England politicians, but he had once, in reply to inquiries from Abolitionists, expressed the opinion that Congress had power to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. When the nomination came before the Senate, it was opposed by Mr. Buchanan and Mr. King, of Alabama, and advocated by Mr. Choate and Henry Clay. Mr. King, who would have received the appointment had Mr. Everett's rejection created a vacancy, concluded a bitter speech by saying that if Mr. Everett, holding views in opposition to the South, was confirmed, the Union would be dissolved! Mr. Clay sprang to his feet, and, pointing his long arm and index finger at



RUFUS CHOATE.

Mr. King, said: "And I tell you, Mr. President, that if a gentleman so pre-eminently qualified for the position of Minister should be rejected by this Senate, and for the reason given by the Senator from Alabama, this Union is dissolved already."

The nomination of Mr. Everett was confirmed by a vote of twenty-three to nineteen. Every Democrat who voted, and two Southern Whigs, voted against him, and several Northern Democrats dodged, among them Pierce, of New Hampshire, Williams, of Maine, and Wright, of New York. The Southern Whigs who stood their ground for Mr. Everett were Clay, Morehead, Berrien, Clayton, Mangum, Merrick, Graham, and Rives.

A second fiscal agent bill was prepared in accordance with the President's expressed views, and he said to Mr. A. H. H. Stuart, then a Representative from Virginia, holding him by the hand: "Stuart, if you can be instrumental in getting this bill through Congress, I shall esteem you as the best friend I have on earth." An attempt was made in the Senate to amend it, which Mr. Choate, who was regarded as the mouth-piece of Daniel Webster, opposed. Mr. Clay endeavored to make him admit that some member of the Administration had inspired him to assert that if the bill was amended it would be vetoed, but Mr. Choate had examined too many witnesses to be forced into any admission that he did not choose to make. Persisting in his demand, Mr. Clay's manner and language became offensive. "Sir," said Mr. Choate, "I insist on my right to explain what I did say in my own words."

"But I want a direct answer," exclaimed Mr. Clay. "Mr. President," said Mr. Choate, "the gentleman will have to take my answer as I choose to give it to him."

Here the two Senators were called to order, and both of them were requested to take their seats. The next day Mr. Clay made an explanation, which was satisfactory to Mr. Choate.

This second bank or fiscal agent bill was passed by Congress without the change of a word or a letter, yet the President vetoed it. When the veto message was received in the Senate there were some hisses in the gallery, which brought Mr. Benton to his feet. Expressing his indignation, he asked that the "ruffians" be taken into custody, and one of those who had hissed was arrested, but, on penitently expressing his regret, he was discharged. Tyler's Cabinet first learned that he intended to veto this bank bill through the columns of a New York paper, and such was their indignation that all, with the exception of Mr. Webster, resigned. Mr. Ewing, who had been appointed Secretary of the Treasury by President Harrison, and who had been continued in office by Mr. Tyler, published his letter of resignation, which gave all the facts in the case. The Whig Senators and Representatives immediately met in caucus and adopted an address to the people. It was written by Mr. John P. Kennedy, of Maryland, and it set forth in temperate language the differences between them and the President, his equivocations and tergiversations, and in conclusion they repudiated the Administration.

Caleb Cushing, of Newburyport, Massachusetts, then serving his fourth term in the House, espoused the cause of President Tyler, and boldly opposed the intolerant action of his Whig associates. Years afterward Franklin Pierce told his most intimate friend, Nathaniel Hawthorne, that Caleb Cushing had such mental variety and activity that he could not, if left

to himself, keep hold of one view of things, but needed the influence of a more stable judgment to keep him from divergency. His fickleness was intellectual, not moral. Mr. Cushing was at that time forty-one years of age, of medium height, with intellectual features, quick-glancing dark eyes, and an unmusical voice. He spoke with ease and fluency, but his speeches read better than they sounded. His knowledge was vast and various, and his style, tempered by foreign travel, was classical. He had mastered history, politics, law, jurisprudence, moral science, and almost every other branch of knowledge, which enabled him to display an erudition as marvelous in amount as as it was varied in kind.



CALEB CUSHING.

The Southern Representatives, who had regarded Mr. Cushing with some apprehension as a possible leader of the coming struggle for the abolition of slavery, were well pleased when they saw him breaking away from his Northern friends. When an attempt was made to depose John Quincy Adams from the Chairmanship of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, because he had stood up manfully for the right of petition, the irate ex-President asserted in the House that the position had been offered to Mr. Cushing, who was also a member. This Mr. Cushing denied, but Mr. Adams, his bald head turning scarlet, exclaimed :

"I had the information from the gentleman himself."

In this debate, Mr. Adams went at some length into the history of his past life, his intercourse and friendship with Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, during their successive Presidential terms. He spoke of their confidence in himself, as manifested by the various important offices conferred upon him, alluding to important historical facts in this connection. He knew that they all abhorred slavery, and he could prove it, if it were desired, from the testimony of Jefferson, Madison, and Washington themselves. There was not an Abolitionist of the wildest character, the ex-President affirmed, but might find in the writings of Jefferson, at the time of the Declaration of Independence, and during his whole life, down to its very last year, a justification for everything their party says on the subject of slavery, and a description of the horrors of slavery greater than they had power to express.

Henry A. Wise had been Mr. Clay's instrument in securing the nomination of Mr. Tyler as Vice-President, and was the most influential adviser at the White House. He was then in the prime of his early manhood, tall, spare, and upright, with large, lustreless, gray-blue eyes, high cheek bones, a large mouth, a complexion saffron-hued, from his inordinate use of tobacco, and coarse, long hair, brushed back from his low forehead. He was brilliant in conversation, and when he addressed an audience he was the incarnation of effective eloquence. No one has ever poured forth in the Capitol of the United States such torrents of words, such erratic flights of fancy, such blasting insinuations, such solemn prayers, such blasphemous imprecations. Like Jeremiah of old, he felt the dark

shadow of coming events; and he regarded the Yankees as the inevitable foes of the old Commonwealth of Virginia. He had hoped that the caucus of Whig Representatives, at the commencement of the session, would have nominated him for Speaker. But John White, of Kentucky, had received the nomination, Mr. Clay having urged his friends to vote for him, and Mr. Wise, goaded on by disappointed ambition, sought revenge by endeavoring to destroy the Whig party. He hoped to build on its ruins a new political organization composed of Whigs and of such Democrats as might be induced to enlist under the Tyler banner by a lavish distribution of the "loaves and fishes." President Tyler's vanity made it easy to secure him as a figure-head, and it was an easy task to array him in direct opposition to the Clay Whigs, when John M. Botts wrote an insulting letter, in which he recommended his political associates to "head Captain Tyler, or die."



HENRY A. WISE.

As the close of the extra session approached, the breach between President Tyler and the Whig party was widened, and those who had elected him saw their hopes blasted, and the labors of the campaign lost, by his ambitious perfidy. Nearly all of his nominations

for office were promptly rejected, and those who for place had espoused his cause found themselves disappointed. A few days before the final adjournment, it was announced that Senator Bagby, of Alabama, would the next afternoon expose the shortcomings of the Whig party. He was a type of the old-school Virginia lawyers, who had removed to the Gulf States, and there acquired political position and fortune. He was a large man, with a bald head, a strong voice, and a watch-seal dangling from his waistband.

The "Corporal's Guard" who sustained Mr. Tyler were all on hand and prominently seated to hear him abuse the Whigs, and they evidently had great expectations that he might eulogize the President. Upshur, Cushing, Wise, Gilmer, with the President's sons, Robert and John, were on the floor of the Senate, and they were evidently delighted as the eloquent Alabamian handled the Whig party without gloves. He undertook to show that they were for and against a National Bank, in favor of and opposed to a tariff, pro-slavery and anti-slavery, according to their location, but all united by a desire to secure the Federal offices.

Proceeding in a strain of fervid eloquence, he all at once turned toward Senator Smith, of Indiana, who was sitting in front of him, and asked, in stentorian tones: "Why don't you Whigs keep your promises to the American people? I pause for an answer?" Mr. Smith promptly replied: "Because *your* President won't let us." Mr. Bagby stood still for a moment, and then contemptuously exclaimed: "*Our* President! OUR President! Do you think we would go to the most corrupt party that was ever formed in the United States, and then take for our President the meanest renegade that ever left that party?" He then went on to casti-

gate Mr. Tyler, while the "Corporal's Guard," sadly disappointed, one by one, "silently stole away," and had no more faith in Mr. Bagby.

Junius Brutus Booth still continued to be the leading star at the Washington Theatre, and President Tyler used often to enjoy his marvelous renderings, especially his "Sir Giles Overreach," "King Lear," "Shylock," "Othello," and "Richard the Third." Booth, at this time, was more than ever a slave to intoxicating drink, so much so that he would often disappoint his audiences, sometimes wholly failing to appear, yet his popularity remained unabated.



FRANKLIN PIERCE was born at Hillsborough, New Hampshire, November 23d, 1804; was a Representative from New Hampshire, December 2d, 1833, to March 3d, 1837; was United States Senator from New Hampshire, September 4th, 1837–1842, when he resigned; declined the position of Attorney-General, offered him by President Polk in 1846; served in the Mexican War as brigadier-general; was President of the United States, March 4th, 1853, to March 3d, 1857, and died at Concord, New Hampshire, October 8th, 1860.

## CHAPTER XXI.

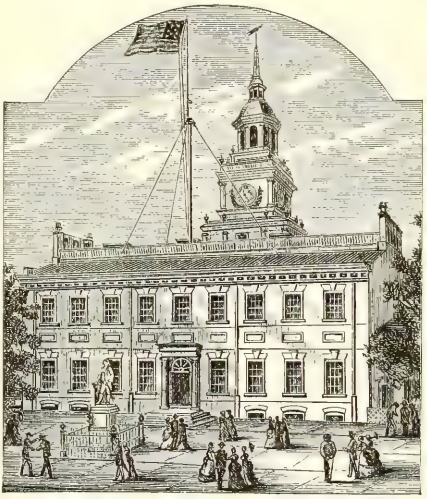
### DIPLOMATIC AND SOCIAL LIFE OF WEBSTER.

THE ASHBURTON TREATY—DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS—SPEECH BY DANIEL WEBSTER—WEBSTER'S SOCIAL LIFE—MR. CLAY'S NIGHTCAPS—ADMINISTRATION ORGANS—JUSTICE TO JOHN TYLER.

MR. WEBSTER'S great work as Secretary of State—indeed, he regarded it as the greatest achievement of his life—was the negotiation of a treaty with Great Britain adjusting all existing controversies. To secure this had prompted Mr. Webster to enter the Cabinet of General Harrison, and when Mr. Tyler became President Mr. Webster pledged himself to his wealthy friends in Boston and New York not to resign until the troubles with the mother country had been amicably adjusted. His position soon became very unpleasant. On the one hand President Tyler, whose great desire was the annexation of Texas, wanted him to resign; on the other hand, many influential Whigs began to regard him with distrust for remaining in the enemy's camp. But Mr. Webster kept on, regardless of what was said by friend or foe.

The appointment of Lord Ashburton to represent the British Government was especially gratifying to Mr. Webster, who had become personally acquainted with him when he visited England in 1839. Lord Ashburton's family name was Alex. Baring. He had

visited Philadelphia when it was the seat of the Federal Government as the representative of his father's banking house. Among those to whom he had letters of introduction was Mr. John A. Bingham, a wealthy merchant and United States Senator, who lived in great style. Miss Maria Matilda Bingham, the Senator's only daughter, who was but sixteen years of age, had just been persuaded by the Count de Tilly, a profligate French nobleman, to elope with him. They were married, but the Count soon intimated that he did not care for the girl if he could obtain some of her prospective fortune. He finally accepted five thousand pounds in cash and an annuity of six hundred pounds, and left for France. A divorce was obtained, and Senator Bingham was well pleased soon afterward when young Mr. Baring wooed and won his daughter. With the fortune her father gave her he was enabled on his return to London to enter the House of Baring Brothers as a partner, and on retiring from business in 1835 he was created a Baron, with the title of Lord Ashburton. When appointed on a special mission to Washington Lord Ashburton wrote to Mr. Webster, asking him to rent a suitable house for the accommodation of himself and suite. Mr.



ORIGINAL SEAT OF THE GOVERNMENT.
(Old State-House, Philadelphia.)

Webster accordingly rented the spacious and thoroughly equipped mansion erected by Matthew St. Clair Clarke, Clerk of the House, in his prosperous days. The price paid was twelve thousand dollars rent for ten months, and an additional thousand dollars for damages.

Mr. Webster, who had received full powers from President Tyler to conduct the negotiations on the part of the United States, occupied the Swann House, near that occupied by Lord Ashburton. Much of the preliminary negotiation was carried on at the dinner-tables of the contracting parties, and Congressional guests were alike charmed by the hospitable attentions of the "fine old English gentleman" and the Yankee Secretary of State. Lord Ashburton offered his guests the cream of culinary perfection and the gastronomic art, with the rarest wines, while at Mr. Webster's table American delicacies were served in American style. Maine salmon, Massachusetts mackerel, New Jersey oysters, Florida shad, Kentucky beef, West Virginia mutton, Illinois prairie chickens, Virginia terrapin, Maryland crabs, Delaware canvas-back ducks, and South Carolina rice-birds were cooked by Monica, and served in a style that made the



THE SWANN HOUSE.

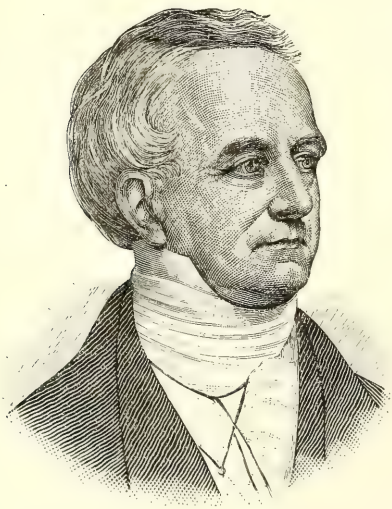
banker diplomat admit their superiority to the potages, sauces, entremets, ragouts, and desserts of his Parisian white-capped manipulator of casse-roles.

Lord Ashburton was about five feet ten inches in height, and was heavily built, as Mr. Webster was. He had a large head, a high forehead, dark eyes, with heavy eyebrows, and a clear red and white complexion. His principal secretary and adviser was Mr. Frederick William Adolphus Bruce, then in the Foreign Office, who, after a brilliant diplomatic career, was appointed a Knight Commander of the Bath, and came again to Washington in 1865 as the British Minister. Another secretary was Mr. Stepping, a fair-complexioned little gentleman, who was a great wit, and who made a deal of sport for the Congressional guests.

The treaty, as finally agreed upon, settled a vexatious quarrel over our Northeastern boundary, it overthrew the British claim to exercise the right of search, and it established the right of property in slaves on an American vessel driven by stress of weather into a British port. But the treaty did not settle the exasperating controversy over the fisheries on the North Atlantic coast or the disputed Northwestern boundary. When the treaty finally reached the Senate, it was debated for several weeks in executive session, Mr. Benton leading a strong opposition to it. Near the close of the debate Mr. Calhoun made a strong speech in favor of ratification, in which he praised both Lord Ashburton and Mr. Webster. This speech secured the ratification of the treaty.

Having concluded the Ashburton Treaty, Mr. Webster started for New England to enjoy the rural life so dear to him on his farm at Franklin, New Hampshire, and at Marshfield, Massachusetts. He announced, be-

fore he left Washington, that on his arrival at Boston he should address his friends in Faneuil Hall, and there was an intense desire to hear what he might have to say on public affairs. The leaders of the Whig party hoped that he would announce a resignation of his office as Secretary of State, denounce the duplicity of President Tyler, and come gracefully to the support of Henry Clay, who had imperiously demanded the Presidential nomination. But Mr. Webster declined to accept the advice given him, and spoke his mind very freely and frankly. There was—said one who heard the speech—no sly insinuation or innuendo, but a straightforward, independent expression of truth, a copious outpouring of keen reproof, solemn admonition, and earnest entreaty.



ABBOTT LAWRENCE.

Among those former home-friends whose behavior was very annoying to Mr. Webster at this time was Mr. Abbott Lawrence, a Boston merchant, who, having amassed a large fortune, coveted political honors, and was a liberal contributor to the campaign fund of his party. Astute and observing, he imagined himself a representative of the merchant-princes of Venice under the Doges and England under the Plantagenets, and he spoke in a measured, stately tone, advancing his ideas with

a positiveness that would not brook contradiction. On several occasions he had been one of "the solid men of Boston" who had contributed considerable sums for the pecuniary relief of Mr. Webster, and this emboldened him to assume a dictatorial tone in advising the Secretary of State to resign after the Ashburton Treaty had been negotiated. The command was treated with sovereign contempt, and thenceforth Mr. Lawrence looked upon Mr. Webster as ungrateful, and as standing in the way of his own political advancement. But Mr. Webster defied the would-be cotton-lord, saying: "I am a Whig—a Faneuil Hall Whig—and if any one undertakes to turn me out of that communion, let him see to it who gets out first."



WEBSTER'S AFRICAN COOK.

While Mr. Webster had been negotiating the Ashburton Treaty, and after he had found rest at Marshfield, he displayed the same sprightly humor and tender sweetness which so endeared him to those who were permitted to enjoy intimate social relations with him. He always rose with the sun, visiting his farm-yards at Marshfield, and going to market at Washington, before breakfast, with a visit at either place to the kitchen, where he would gravely discuss the culinary programme of the day with Monica, a cook of African de-

scent, whose freedom he had purchased. After breakfast, he would study or write or fish all day, dressing for a late dinner, after which he gave himself up to recreation; sometimes, as Colonel Seaton's daughter has pleasantly told us, singing hymns or songs, generally impartially to the same tune; or gravely essaying the steps of a *minuet de la cour*, which he had seen danced in the courtly Madisonian era; or joining in the jests of the gay circle, his magnificent teeth gleaming, his great, living coals of eyes—"sleeping furnaces," Carlyle called them—soft as a woman's; or his rare, tender smile lighting up the dusky grandeur of his face. Mr. Webster was not, at that period of his life, an intemperate drinker, although, like many other gentlemen of that day, he often imbibed too freely at the dinner-table.

An amusing account has been given of an after-dinner speech by Mr. Webster at a gathering of his political friends, when he had to be prompted by a friend who sat just behind him, and gave him successively phrases and topics. The speech proceeded somewhat after this fashion: Prompter: "Tariff." Webster: "The tariff, gentlemen, is a subject requiring the profound attention of the statesman. American industry, gentlemen, must be—" (nods a little). Prompter: "National Debt." Webster: "And, gentlemen, there's the national debt—it should be paid (loud cheers, which rouse the speaker); yes, gentlemen, it should be paid (cheers), and I'll be hanged if it sha'n't be—(taking out his pocket-book)—I'll pay it myself! How much is it?" This last question was asked of a gentleman near him with drunken seriousness, and, coupled with the recollection of the well-known impecuniosity of Webster's pocket-book it excited roars of laughter,

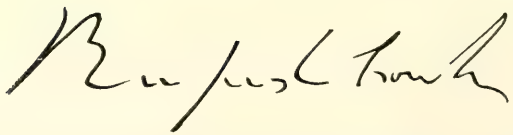
amidst which the orator sank into his seat and was soon asleep.

Prominent among the Whig Senators was Nathan F. Dixon, of Westerly, Rhode Island. He was one of the old school of political gentlemen. His snow-white hair was tied in a long queue, he had a high forehead, aquiline nose, wide mouth, and dark eyes, which gleamed through his glasses. Respecting the body of which he was a member, he used to appear in a black coat and knee-breeches, with a ruffled shirt, white waistcoat, and white silk stockings. He was the Chairman of the Whig Senatorial caucus, and on the last night of the extra session Mr. Clay had complimented him, in rather equivocal language, on the ability with which he had presided. When the laughter had subsided, Senator Dixon rose, and with inimitable humor thanked the Senator from Kentucky. "I am aware," said he, "that I never had but one equal as a presiding officer, and that was the Senator from Kentucky. Some of you may have thought that he was not in earnest, but did you know him as well as I do, you would credit any remark he may make before ten o'clock at night—after that, owing to the strength of his night-caps, there may be doubts." Roars of laughter followed, and the Senate caucus adjourned, as the Senate had done, *sine die*.

President Tyler had great faith in the power of the newspaper press, and he secured, at an early period of his Administration, by a lavish distribution of the advertising patronage of the Executive Departments, an "organ" in nearly every State. The journals thus recompensed for their support of the Administration were generally without political influence, but Mr. Tyler prized their support, and personally looked after their interests. Alluding to them in a letter to a

friend, he said: "Their motives may be selfish, but if I reject them for that, who among the great mass of office-holders can be trusted? They give one all the aid in their power, and I do not stop to inquire into motives." In another letter he complains of an official at New Orleans, saying: "I have felt no little surprise at the fact that he should have thrown into the *Bee* [a most abusive paper] advertisements of great value, and refused to give them to the *Republican*, a paper zealous and able in the cause of the Administration." The central "organ," from which the others were to take their cues, was the *Madisonian*, originally established by Thomas Allen. He disposed of it after he married the handsome and wealthy Miss Russell, of Missouri, whose tiara and necklace of diamonds had been the envy of all the ladies at Washington. John B. Johnson, the author of *Wild Western Scenes*, then became the editor, and wrote ponderous editorials advocating "Justice to John Tyler," which the minor organs all over the country were expected to copy.

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Rufus Choate was born at Ipswich, Massachusetts, October 1st, 1819; was a Representative in Congress from Massachusetts, 1831–1834; was United States Senator, 1841–1845, and died at Halifax, Nova Scotia, July 13th, 1859.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE CAPITOL AND THE DRAWING-ROOMS.

A STORMY SESSION—JOHN QUINCY ADAMS AT BAY—THE CODE OF HONOR—THE SUPREME COURT—VISIT OF CHARLES DICKENS—THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY—A RECEPTION AT THE WHITE HOUSE—THE PRESIDENT'S BALL FOR CHILDREN—DIPLOMATIC HOSPITALITY—OLE BULL—A TROUBLESOME CONGRESSMAN.

WHEN the Twenty-seventh Congress met in December, 1841, it was evident that there could be no harmonious action between that body and the President, but he was not disposed to succumb. Writing to a friend, he said the coming session was "likely to prove as turbulent and fractious as any since the days of Adam. But [he added] I have a firm grip on the reins." In this he was mistaken, or, rather, he had been deceived by the sycophants around him. Neither House paid any attention to the recommendations which he made in his messages, and only a few of his nominations were confirmed. The Whigs, who had elected the President, repudiated all responsibility for his acts and treated him as a traitor, and the Democrats, while they accepted offices from him, generally spoke of him with contempt.

The Senate contained at that time many able men. Henry Clay was in the pride of his political power, but uneasy and restive as a caged lion. John C. Calhoun was in the full glory of his intellectual magnifi-

cence and purity of personal character. Preston's flexible voice and graceful gestures invested his eloquence with resistless effect over those whom it was intended to persuade, to encourage, or to control. Barrow, of Louisiana, the handsomest man in the Senate, spoke with great effect. Phelps, of Vermont, was a somewhat eccentric yet forcible debater. Silas Wright, Levi Woodbury, and Robert J. Walker were laboring for the restoration of the Democrats to power. Benton stood sturdily, like a gnarled oak tree, defying all who offered to oppose him. Allen, whose loud voice had gained for him the appellation of "the Ohio gong," spoke with his usual vehemence. Franklin Pierce was demonstrating his devotion to the slave-power, while Rufus Choate poured forth his wealth of words in debate, his dark complexion corrugated by swollen veins, and his great, sorrowful eyes gazing earnestly at his listeners. Wendell Phillips once said of Mr. Choate that he was "the man who made it safe to murder, and of whose health thieves asked before they began to steal." It may have been that in



LEVI WOODBURY.

the excitement of pleading before a jury he may have occasionally been carried beyond the depth of logical argument which his judgment approved. But in the Senate he had no equal as an orator. His elaborate and brilliant speeches were listened to with earnest attention by the other Senators, who would now be convulsed with laughter and then flooded with tears.

In the House of Representatives there were unusually brilliant and able men. John Quincy Adams, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, was the recognized leader. Mr. Fillmore, of New York, a stalwart, pleasant-featured man, with a remarkably clear-toned voice, was Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means. Henry A. Wise, Chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs, was able to secure a large share of patronage for the Norfolk Navy Yard. George N. Briggs (afterward Governor of Massachusetts), who was an earnest advocate of temperance, was Chairman of the Postal Committee. Joshua R. Giddings, who was a sturdy opponent of slavery at that early day, was Chairman of the Committee on Claims. John P. Kennedy, of Maryland, an accomplished scholar and popular author, was Chairman of the Committee on Commerce; Edward Stanly, of North Carolina, was Chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs; Leverett Saltonstall, of the Committee on Manufactures; indeed, there was not a Committee of the House that did not have a first-class man as its chairman.

But the session soon became a scene of sectional strife. Mr. Adams, in offering his customary daily budget of petitions, presented one from several anti-slavery citizens of Haverhill, Massachusetts, praying for a dissolution of the Union, which raised a tempest.

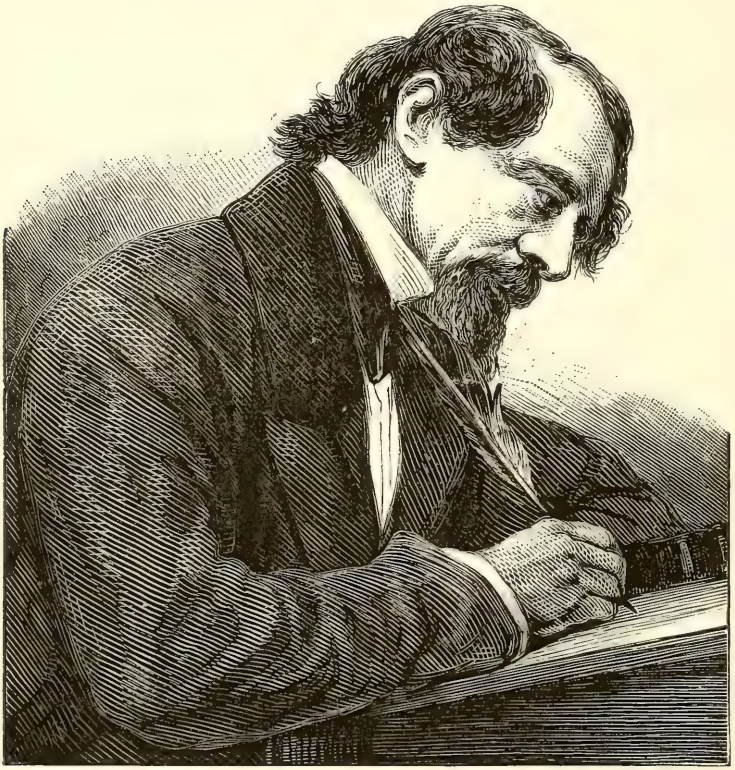
The Southern Representatives met that night in caucus, and the next morning Mr. Marshall, of Kentucky, offered a series of resolutions deploring the presentation of the obnoxious petition and censuring Mr. Adams for having presented it. An excited and acrimonious debate, extending over several days, followed. The principal feature of this exciting scene was the venerable object of censure, then nearly fourscore years of age, his limbs trembling with palsy, his bald head crimson with excitement, and tears dropping from his eyes, as he for four days stood defying the storm and hurling back defiantly the opprobrium with which his adversaries sought to stigmatize him. He was animated by the recollection that the slave-power had prevented the re-election of his father and of himself to the Presidential chair, and he poured forth the hoarded wrath of half a century. Lord Morpeth, who was then in Washington, and who occupied a seat on the floor of the House near Mr. Adams during the entire debate, said that "he put one in mind of a fine old game-cock, and occasionally showed great energy and power of sarcasm."

Mr. Wise became the prosecutor of Mr. Adams, and asserted that both he and his father were in alliance with Great Britain against the South. Mr. Adams replied with great severity, his shrill voice ringing through the hall. "Four or five years ago," said he, "there came to this House a man with his hands and face dripping with the blood of murder, the blotches of which are yet hanging upon him, and when it was proposed that he should be tried by this House for that crime I opposed it." After this allusion to the killing of Mr. Cilley in a duel, Mr. Adams proceeded to castigate Mr. Wise without mercy.

At the spring races, in 1842, over the Washington Course, Mr. Stanly, of North Carolina, accidentally rode so close to the horse of Mr. Wise as to jostle that gentleman, who gave him several blows with a cane. Mr. Stanly at once sent a friend to Mr. Wise with an invitation to meet him at Baltimore, that they might settle their difficulty, and then left for that city. Mr. Wise remained in Washington, where he was arrested the next day, under the anti-dueling law, and placed under bonds to keep the peace. Mr. Stanly remained at Baltimore for several days, expecting Mr. Wise. He was the guest of Mr. Reverdy Johnson, under whose instruction he practiced with dueling-pistols, firing at a mark. One morning Mr. Johnson took a pistol himself and fired it, but the ball rebounded and struck him in the left eye, completely destroying it. Mr. Stanly returned the next day to Washington, where mutual friends adjusted the difficulty between Mr. Wise and himself.

The vaulted arches of the old Supreme Court room in the basement of the Capitol (now the Law Library) used to echo in those days with the eloquence of Clay, Webster, Choate, Sargent, Binney, Atherton, Kennedy, Berrien, Crittenden, Phelps, and other able lawyers. Their Honors, the Justices, were rather a jovial set, especially Judge Story, who used to assert that every man should laugh at least an hour during each day, and who had himself a great fund of humorous anecdotes. One of them, that he loved to tell, was of Jonathan Mason, of whom he always spoke in high praise. It set forth that at the trial of a Methodist preacher for the alleged murder of a young girl, the evidence was entirely circumstantial, and there was a wide difference of opinion concerning his guilt. One

morning, just before the opening of the court, a brother preacher stepped up to Mason and said: "Sir, I had a dream last night, in which the angel Gabriel appeared and told me that the prisoner was not guilty." "Ah!" replied Mason, "have him subpœnaed immediately."



CHARLES DICKENS.

Charles Dickens first visited Washington in 1842. He was then a young man. The attentions showered upon the great progenitor of Dick Swiveller turned his head. The most prominent men in the country told him how they had ridden with him in the *Markis of Granby*,

with old Weller on the box and Samivel on the dickey; how they had played cribbage with the Marchioness and quaffed the rosy with Dick Swiveller; how they had known honest Tim Linkwater and angelic Little Nell, ending with the welcome words of Sir John Falstaff, "D'ye think we didn't know ye? We knew ye as well as Him that made ye."

Mr. Webster gave a party on the night of January 26th, 1842, which was the crowning entertainment of the season. Eight rooms of his commodious house were thrown open to the guests, and were most dazzlingly lighted. There had not been in Washington for two Administrations so large and brilliant an assemblage of female beauty and political rank. Among the more distinguished guests were the President, Lord Morpeth, Mr. Fox, the British Minister, M. Bacourt, the French Minister, Mr. Bodisco, the Russian Minister, and most of the Diplomatic Corps attached to the several legations, besides several Judges of the Supreme Court and many members of Congress. The honorable Secretary received his numerous guests with that dignity and courtesy which was characteristic of him, and seemed to be in excellent spirits. There was no dancing, nor even music. There was, however,



WASHINGTON IRVING.

plenty of lively conversation, promenades, eating of ices, and sipping of rich wines, with the usual spice of flirtation.

President Tyler's last reception of the season of 1842, on the night of the 15th of March, gathered one of the greatest crowds ever assembled in the White House. There was every variety of the American citizen *et citoyenne* present—those of every form, shape, length, breadth, complexion, and dress. There were old ladies decked in the finery of their youthful days, and children in their nurses' arms. "Boz" was the lion of the evening, and he stood like Patience on a monument. He totally eclipsed Washington Irving, who was then at Washington to receive his instructions as Minister to Spain. The President's Cabinet, Foreign Ministers, some of the Judges of the Supreme Court, a sprinkling of Senators, two or three scores of Representatives, and fifteen hundred men, women, and children, in every costume, and from every nook and corner of the country, made up the remainder of the medley.

A children's fancy ball was given at the White House by President Tyler, in honor of the birthday of his eldest granddaughter. Dressed as a fairy, with gossamer wings, a diamond star on her forehead, and a silver wand, she received her guests. Prominent among the young people was the daughter of General Almonte, the Mexican Minister, arrayed as an Aztec Princess. Master Schermerhorn, of New York, was beautifully dressed as an Albanian boy, and Ada Cutts, as a flower-girl, gave promise of the intelligence and beauty which in later years led captive the "Little Giant" of the West. The boys and girls of Henry A. Wise were present, the youngest in the arms of its mother, and every State in the Union was represented.

After old Baron Bodisco's marriage to the young and beautiful Miss Williams, the Russian Legation at Georgetown became the scene of brilliant weekly entertainments, given, it was asserted, by especial direction



PRESIDENT TYLER'S
PARTY FOR CHILDREN.

of the Emperor Nicholas, who had a special allowance made for table-money. At these entertainments there was dancing, an excellent supper, and a room devoted to whist. Mr. Webster, Mr. Clay, General Scott, and

several of the Diplomatic Corps were invariably to be seen handling "fifty-two pieces of printed pasteboard," while the old Baron, though not a good player, as the host of the evening, was accustomed to take a hand. One night he sat down to play with those better acquainted with the game, and he lost over a thousand dollars. At the supper-table he made the following announcement, in a sad tone: "Ladies and gentlemens! It is my disagreeable duty to make the announce that these receptions must have an end, and to declare them at an end for the present, because why? The fund for their expend, ladies and gentlemens, is exhaust, and they must discontinue."

Ole Bull, the renowned violinist, then gave a concert at Washington, which was largely and fashionably attended. In the midst of one of his most exquisite performances, while every breath was suspended, and every ear attentive to catch the sounds of his magical instrument, the silence was suddenly broken and the harmony harshly interrupted by the well-known voice of General Felix Grundy McConnell, a Representative from the Talladega district of Alabama, shouting, "None of your high-falutin, but give us Hail Columbia, and bear hard on the treble!" "Turn him out!" was shouted from every part of the house, and the police force in attendance undertook to remove him from the hall. "Mac," as he was called, was not only one of the handsomest men in Congress, but one of the most athletic, and it was a difficult task for the policemen to overpower him, although they used their clubs. After he was carried from the hall, some of his Congressional friends interfered, and secured his release.

The publication of verbatim reports of the proceed-



OLE BULL, THE FAMOUS VIOLINIST.

ings of Congress was systematically begun during Polk's Administration by John C. Rives, in the *Congressional Globe*, established a few years previously as an offshoot from the old Democratic organ. This unquestionably had a disastrous effect upon the eloquence of Congress, which no longer hung upon the accents of its leading members, and rarely read what appeared in the report of its debates. Imitating Demosthenes and Cicero, Chatham and Burke, Mirabeau and Lamartine, the Congressmen of the first fifty years of the Republic poured forth their breathing thoughts and burning words in polished and elegant language, and were listened to by their colleagues and by spectators so alive to the beauties of eloquence that they were entitled to the appellation of assemblages of trained critics. The publication of verbatim reports of the debates put an end to this, for Senators and Representatives addressed their respective constituents through the *Congressional Globe*.



FELIX GRUNDY was born in Berkeley County, Virginia (now West Virginia), September 11th, 1777; was a Representative from Tennessee, 1811–1814; was United States Senator, 1829–1838; was Attorney-General under President Van Buren, 1838–1840; was again elected Senator in 1840, and died at Nashville, December 19th of the same year.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

THE ACCIDENTAL PRESIDENT—VIRGINIA HOSPITALITY—SECOND-HAND STYLE—THE PATHFINDER'S MARRIAGE—BARON DE BODISCO, OF RUSSIA—MR. FOX, OF GREAT BRITAIN—THE AUTHOR OF "SWEET HOME"—THE DAGUERREOTYPE—THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH—THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE—RESIGNATION OF MR. WEBSTER—RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CABINET—FATAL ACCIDENT ON THE PRINCETON—MARRIAGE OF PRESIDENT TYLER.

JOHN TYLER, who was fifty-one years of age when he took possession of the Executive Mansion, was somewhat above the medium height, and of slender figure, with long limbs and great activity of movement. His thin auburn hair turned white during his term of office, his nose was large and prominent, his eyes were of a bluish-gray, his lips were thin, and his cheeks sunken. His manners were those of the old school of Virginia gentlemen, and he was very courteous to strangers. The ceremonious etiquette established at the White House by Van Buren vanished, and the President lived precisely as he had on his plantation, attended by his old family slaves. He invariably invited visitors with whom he was acquainted, or strangers who were introduced to him, to visit the family dining-room and "take something" from a sideboard well garnished with decanters of ardent spirits and wines, with a bowl of juleps in the summer and of egg-nog in the winter. He thus

expended nearly all of his salary, and used to regret that it was not larger, that he might entertain his guests more liberally.

One day President Tyler joked Mr. Wise about his little one-horse carriage, which the President styled "a candle-box on wheels," to which the Representative from the Accomac district retorted by telling Mr. Tyler that he had been riding for a month in a second-hand carriage purchased at the sale of the effects of Mr. Paulding, the Secretary of the Navy under Mr. Van Buren, and having the Paulding coat-of-arms emblazoned on the door panels. The President laughed at the sally, and gave orders at once to have the armorial bearings of the Pauldings painted over. Economy also prompted the purchase of some partly worn suits of livery at the sale of the effects of a foreign Minister, and these were afterward worn by the colored waiters at state dinners.



"BEAU" HICKMAN.

"Beau" Hickman, as he called himself, made his appearance at Washington toward the close of the Tyler Administration. He was of middle size, with long hair, and an inoffensive, cadaverous countenance. It was his boast that he was born among the slashes of Hanover County, Virginia, and he was to be seen lounging about the hotels, fashionably, yet shabbily, dressed, generally wearing soiled white kid gloves and a white cravat. It was considered the proper thing to introduce strangers to the Beau, who thereupon un-

blushingly demanded his initiation fee, and his impudence sometimes secured him a generous sum. He was always ready to pilot his victims to gambling-houses and other questionable resorts, and for a quarter of a century he lived on the blackmail thus levied upon strangers.

One of the most agreeable homes in Washington was that of Colonel Benton, the veteran Senator from Missouri, whose accomplished and graceful daughters had been thoroughly educated under his own supervision. He was not willing, however, that one of them, Miss Jessie, should receive the attentions of a young second lieutenant in the corps of Topographical Engineers, Mr. Fremont, and the young couple, therefore, eloped and were married clandestinely.



J. C. FREMONT.

The Colonel, although terribly angry at first, accepted the situation, and his powerful support in Congress afterward enabled Mr. Fremont to explore, under the patronage of the General Government, the vast central regions beyond the Rocky Mountains, and to plant the national flag on Wind River Peak, upward of thirteen thousand feet above the Gulf of Mexico.

A very different wedding was that of the Baron Alexander de Bodisco, the Russian Minister Plenipotentiary,

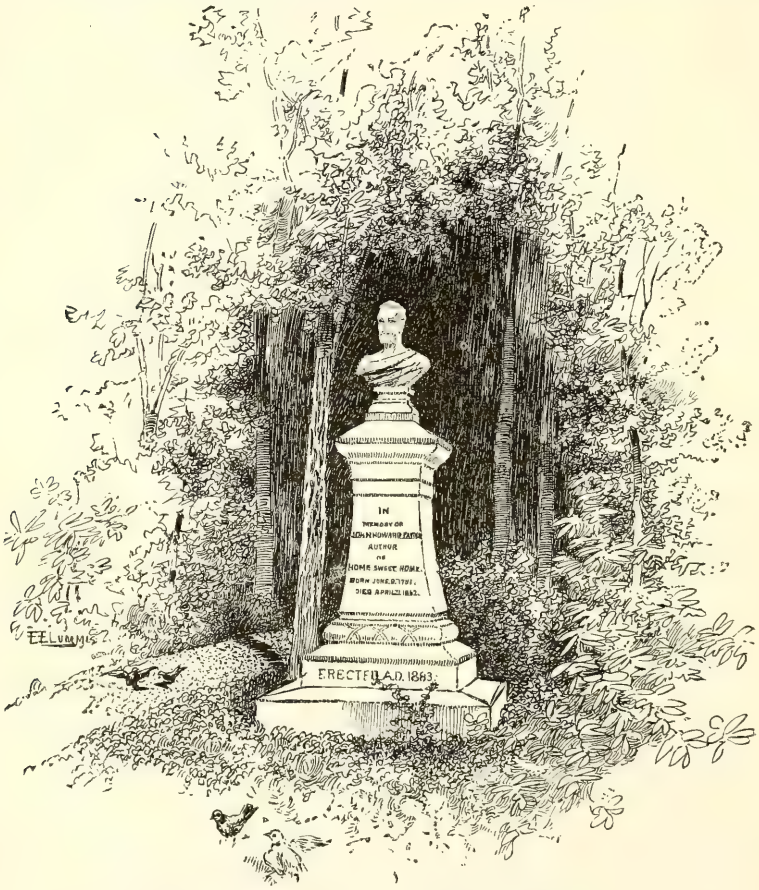
and Miss Harriet Williams, a daughter of the chief clerk in the office of the Adjutant-General. The Baron was nearly fifty years of age, with dyed hair, whiskers, and moustache, and she a blonde schoolgirl of "sweet sixteen," celebrated for her clear complexion and robust beauty. The ceremony was performed at her father's house on Georgetown Heights, and was a regular May and December affair throughout. There were eight groomsmen, six of whom were well advanced in life, and as many bridesmaids, all of them young girls from fourteen to sixteen years of age, wearing long dresses of white satin damask, donated by the bridegroom. The question of precedence gave the Baron much trouble, as he could not determine whether Mr. Fox, then the British Minister and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, or Senator Buchanan, who had been Minister to Russia, should be the first groomsman. This important question was settled by having the groomsmen and bridesmaids stand in couples, four on either side of the bridegroom and bride. The ceremony was witnessed at the bride's residence by a distinguished company, and the bridal party then went in carriages to the Russian Legation, where an elegant entertainment awaited them, and where some of the many guests got gloriously drunk in drinking the health of the happy couple.

Queen Victoria's diplomatic representative at Washington at that time, the Honorable Henry Stephen Fox, was a son of General Fox, of the British Army, who fought at the battle of Lexington in 1775, and a nephew of the eminent statesman, Charles James Fox. He had served in the British Diplomatic Corps for several years, and was thoroughly acquainted with his duties, but he held the least possible intercourse

with the Department of State and rarely entered a private house. He used to rise about three o'clock in the afternoon, and take his morning walk on Pennsylvania Avenue an hour or two later. Miss Seaton says that a gentleman on one occasion, meeting him at dusk in the Capitol grounds, urged him to return with him to dinner, to which Mr. Fox replied that "he would willingly do so, but his people were waiting breakfast for him." On the occasion of the funeral of a member of the Diplomatic Corps, turning to the wife of the Spanish Minister, he said: "How very odd we all look by daylight!" it being the first time he had seen his colleagues except by candle-light. He went to bed at daylight, after watering his plants, of which he was passionately fond.

John Howard Payne visited Washington to solicit from President Tyler a foreign consulate. He was then in the prime of life, slightly built, and rather under the medium height. His finely developed head was bald on the top, but the sides were covered with light brown hair. His nose was large, his eyes were light blue, and he wore a full beard, consisting of side-whiskers and a moustache, which were always well-trimmed. He was scrupulously neat in his dress, and usually wore a dark brown frock coat and a black vest, while his neck was covered with a black satin scarf, which was arranged in graceful folds across his breast. Despite his unpretending manner and his plain attire, there was something about his appearance which never failed to attract attention. His voice was low and musical, and when conversing on any subject in which he was deeply interested he spoke with a degree of earnestness that enchained the attention and touched the hearts of his listeners. After much solicitation by

himself and his friends, he obtained the appointment of United States Consul at Tunis, and left for his post,




PAYNE'S MONUMENT AT OAK HILL CEMETERY.

where he died, his remains being finally brought to the Capital and buried in Oak Hill Cemetery.

Among the curiosities of Washington about this time was the studio of Messrs. Moore & Ward, in one of the committee-rooms at the Capitol, where like-

nesses were taken—as the advertisement read—"with the Daguerreotype, or Pencil of Nature." The "likenesses, by diffused light, could be taken by them in any kind of weather during the daytime, and sitters were not subjected to the slightest inconvenience or unpleasant sensation." The new discovery gradually supplanted the painting of miniatures on ivory in water-colors, and the cutting of silhouettes from white paper, which were shown on a black ground. Another novel invention was the electric, or, as it was then called, the magnetic, telegraph. Mr. Morse had a model on exhibition at the Capitol, and the beaux and belles used to hold brief conversations over the mysterious wire. At last the House considered a bill appropriating twenty-five thousand dollars, to be expended in a series of experiments with the new invention.



SAMUEL F. B. MORSE.

In the brief debate on the bill, Mr. Cave Johnson undertook to ridicule the discovery by proposing that one-half of the proposed appropriation be devoted to experiments with mesmerism, while Mr. Houghton thought that Millerism (a religious craze then prevalent) should be included in the benefits of the appropriation. To those who thus ridiculed the telegraph it

was a chimera, a visionary dream like mesmerism, rather to be a matter of merriment than seriously entertained. Men of character, men of erudition, men who, in ordinary affairs, had foresight, were wholly unable to forecast the future of the telegraph. Other motions disparaging to the invention were made, such as propositions to appropriate part of the sum to a telegraph to the moon. The majority of Congress did not concur in this attempt to defeat the measure by ridicule, and the bill was passed by the close vote of eighty-nine to eighty-three. A change of three votes, however, would have consigned the invention to oblivion. Another year witnessed the triumphant success of the test of its practicability. The invention vindicated its character as a substantial reality; it was no longer a chimera, a visionary scheme to extort money from the public coffers. Mr. Morse was no more subjected to the suspicion of lunacy, nor ridiculed in the Halls of Congress, but he had to give large shares of its profits to Amos Kendall and F. O. J. Smith before he could make his discovery of practical value.

The New York *Tribune* was first published during the Tyler Administration by Horace Greeley, who had very successfully edited the *Log Cabin*, a political newspaper, during the preceding Presidential campaign. The *Tribune*, like the New York *Herald* and *Sun*, was then sold at one cent a copy, and was necessarily little more than a brief summary of the news of the day. But it was the germ of what its editor lived to see it become—a great newspaper. It soon had a good circulation at Washington, where the eminently respectable *National Intelligencer* and the ponderous *Globe* failed to satisfy the reading community.

Mr. Webster remained in the Cabinet until the

spring of 1843, when the evident determination of President Tyler to secure the annexation of Texas made it very desirable that Webster should leave, so he was "frozen out" by studied reserve and coldness. By remaining in the Cabinet he had estranged many of his old political associates, and Colonel Seaton, anxious to bring about a reconciliation, gave one of his famous "stag" supper-parties, to which he invited a large number of Senators and members of the House of Representatives. The convivialities had just commenced when the dignified form of Webster was seen entering the parlor, and as he advanced his big eyes surveyed the company, recognizing, doubtless, some of those who had become partially alienated from him. On the instant, up sprang a distinguished Senator from one of the large Southern States, who exclaimed: "Gentlemen, I have a sentiment to propose—the health of our eminent citizen, the negotiator of the Ashburton Treaty." The company enthusiastically responded. Webster instantly replied: "I have also a sentiment for you,—The Senate of the United States, without which the Ashburton Treaty would have been nothing, and the negotiator of that treaty less than nothing." The quickness and fitness of this at once banished every doubtful or unfriendly feeling. The company clustered around the magnate, whose sprightly and edifying conversation never failed to excite admiration, and the remainder of the evening was spent in a manner most agreeable to all.

Immediately after the resignation of Mr. Webster the Cabinet was reconstructed, but a few months later the bursting of a cannon on the war-steamer Princeton, while returning from a pleasure excursion down the Potomac, killed Mr. Upshur, the newly appointed Sec-

retary of State, Mr. Gilmer, Secretary of the Navy, with six others, while Colonel Benton narrowly escaped death, and nine seamen were injured. The President had intended to witness the discharge of the gun, but was casually detained in the cabin, and so escaped harm. This shocking catastrophe cast a gloom over Washington, and there was a general attendance, irre-



BURSTING OF THE GUN ON THE PRINCETON.

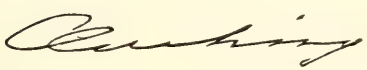
spective of party, at the funeral of the two Cabinet officers, who were buried from the White House.

One of those killed by the explosion on the Princeton was Mr. Gardiner, a New York gentleman, whose ancestors were the owners of Gardiner's Island, in Long Island Sound. His daughter Julia, a young lady of fine presence, rare beauty, and varied accomplishments, had for some time been the object of marked attentions

from President Tyler, although he was in his fifty-fifth year and she but about twenty. Soon after she was deprived of her father they were quietly married in church at New York, and President Tyler brought his young bride to the White House.

Mrs. Lydia Dickinson, wife of Daniel F. Dickinson, a Senator from New York, was the recognized leader of Washington society during the Administration of President Tyler. She was the daughter of Dr. Knapp, and, when a school girl, fell in love with Dickinson, then a smart young wool-dresser, and discerning his talents, urged him to study law and to fit himself for a high political position in life. She was gratified by his unexampled advancement, and when he came here a United States Senator, she soon took a prominent part in the social life of the metropolis.

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CALEB CUSHING was born at Salisbury, Massachusetts, January 7th, 1800; was a Representative in Congress from Massachusetts, 1835–1843; was Commissioner to China, 1843–1845; served in the Mexican War as Colonel and Brigadier-General, 1847–1848; was Attorney-General of the United States under President Pierce, 1853–1857; was counsel for the United States before the Geneva tribunal of arbitration on the Alabama claims, 1871; was Minister to Spain, 1874–1877, and died at Newburyport, Massachusetts, January 2d, 1879.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### HOW TEXAS BECAME A STATE.

JOHN C. CALHOUN, SECRETARY OF STATE—HOW TYLER WAS MANAGED—ADMISSION OF TEXAS—DOUGLAS, OF ILLINOIS—AN ABLE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES — EXCITING PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN — PROGRAMME OF PRESIDENT TYLER—NOMINATION OF HENRY CLAY—THE DEMOCRATIC TICKET—SURPRISE OF MR. DALLAS—THE LIBERTY PARTY—BIRTHNIGHT BALL—EXIT OF JOHN TYLER.

PRESIDENT TYLER was encouraged in his desire to have Texas admitted as a State of the Union by Henry A. Wise, his favorite adviser, and by numerous holders of Texan war scrip and bonds. Before the victims of the Princeton explosion were shrouded, Mr. Wise called upon Mr. McDuffie, a member of the Senate, who represented Mr. Calhoun's interests at Washington, and informed him that the distinguished South Carolinian would be appointed Secretary of State. Mr. Wise urged the Senator to write to Mr. Calhoun at once, begging him not to decline the position should he be nominated and confirmed. Mr. McDuffie did not ask Mr. Wise if he spoke by Mr. Tyler's authority, but evidently believed that he was so authorized, and promised to write to Mr. Calhoun by that afternoon's mail.

Mr. Wise then went to the Executive Mansion, where he found Mr. Tyler in the breakfast room, much affected by the account of the awful catastrophe of the previous day. Mr. Wise told him rather abruptly that

it was no time for grief, as there were vacancies in the Cabinet to be filled, in order that urgent matters then under his control might be disposed of. "What is to be done?" asked President Tyler. Mr. Wise had an answer ready: "Your most important work is the annexation of Texas, and the man for that work is John C. Calhoun, as Secretary of State. Send for him at once."

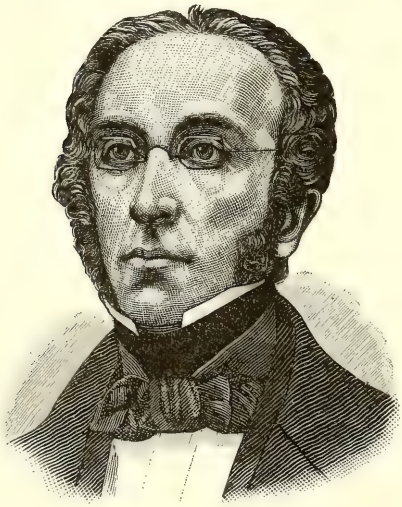
"No, sir!" replied the President, rather coldly. "The annexation of Texas is important, but Mr. Calhoun is not the man of my choice." This was rather a damper on Mr. Wise, but he resolutely insisted on Mr. Calhoun's appointment, and finally the President yielded. The nomination was sent to the Senate and confirmed without opposition. Mr. Calhoun came to Washington, and was soon installed as Secretary of State. It took him only from February 28th to April 12th to conclude the negotiation which placed the "Lone Star" in the azure field of the ensign of the Republic. The treaty of annexation was signed and sent to the Senate for ratification, but after a protracted discussion it was rejected by a vote of sixteen yeas to thirty-five nays. Stephen A. Douglas, who had just entered Congress as one of the seven Representatives



STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS.

from Illinois, came to the front at that time as the principal advocate for the remission of a fine which had been imposed upon General Jackson by Judge Hall at New Orleans twenty-five years before.

This was the first move made by Mr. Douglas in his canvass for the Presidency, but he was soon prominent in that class of candidates of whom Senator William Allen, of Ohio, said, "Sir! they are going about the country like dry-goods drummers, exhibiting samples of their wares." Always on the alert to make new friends and to retain old ones, he was not only a vigorous hand-shaker, but he would throw his arms fondly around a man, as if that man held the first place in his heart. No statement was too chary of truth in its composition, no partisan manœuvre was too openly dishonest, no political pathway was too dangerous, if it afforded an opportunity for making a point for Douglas. He was industrious and sagacious, clothing his brilliant ideas in energetic and emphatic language, and standing like a lion at bay when opposed. He had a herculean frame, with the exception of his lower limbs, which were short and small, dwarfing what otherwise would have been a conspicuous figure, and he was popularly known as "the Little Giant." His



ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

large, round head surmounted a massive neck, and his features were symmetrical, although his small nose deprived them of dignity. His dark eyes, peering from beneath projecting brows, gleamed with energy, mixed with an expression of slyness and sagacity, and his full lips were generally stained at the corners of his mouth with tobacco juice. His voice was neither musical nor soft, and his gestures were not graceful. But he would speak for hours in clear, well enunciated tones, and the sharp Illinois attorney soon developed into the statesman at Washington.



HAMILTON FISH.

The House of Representatives, at that period, could boast of more ability than the Senate. Among the most prominent members were the accomplished Robert C. Winthrop, who so well sustained the reputation of his distinguished ancestors; Hamilton Fish, the representative Knickerbocker from the State of New York; Alexander Ramsey, a worthy descendant of the Pennsylvania Dutchmen; the loquacious Garrett Davis, of Kentucky; the emaciated Alexander H. Stephens, of Georgia, who apparently had not a month to live, yet who rivaled Talleyrand in political intrigue; John Wentworth, a tall son of New Hampshire, transplanted to the prairies of Illinois; Andrew Johnson,

of Tennessee, a born demagogue and self-constituted champion of the people; John Slidell, of New Orleans; Robert Dale Owen, the visionary communist from Indiana; Howell Cobb, of Georgia, and Jacob Thompson, of Mississippi, who were busily laying the foundations for the Southern Confederacy, "with slavery as its corner-stone;" the brilliant Robert C. Schenck, of Ohio, and the genial Isaac E. Holmes, of South Carolina, who softened the asperities of debate by many kindly comments made in an undertone.

One of General Schenck's stories was told by him to illustrate the "change of base" by those Whigs who had enlisted in the Tyler guard, yet declared that they had not shifted their position. "Many years previous," he said, "when silk goods were scarce and dear, an old lady in Ohio purchased a pair of black silk stockings. Being very proud of this addition to her dress, she wore them frequently until they became quite worn out; as often, however, as a hole appeared in these choice articles, she very carefully darned it up; but for this purpose, having no silk, she was obliged to use white yarn. She usually appropriated Saturday evenings to this exercise. Finally, she had darned them so much that not a single particle of the original material or color remained. Yet such was the force of habit with her that as often as Saturday evening came she would say to her granddaughter, 'Anny, bring me my black silk stockings.'"

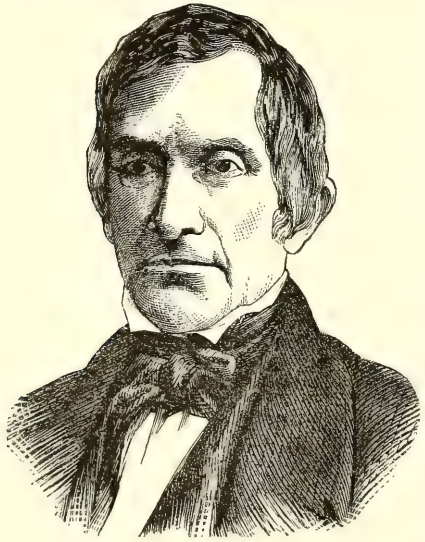
The Presidential campaign of 1844 was very exciting. Mr. Van Buren's friends did not entertain a shadow of doubt that he would be nominated, and his opponents in the Democratic ranks had almost lost hope of defeating him in the nominating convention, when, at the suggestion of Mr. Calhoun, he was adroitly ques-

tioned on the annexation of Texas in a letter written to him by Mr. Hamett, a Representative from Mississippi. Mr. Van Buren was too sagacious a politician not to discover the pit thus dug for him, and he replied with great caution, avowing himself in favor of the annexation of Texas when it could be brought about peacefully and honorably, but against it at that time, when it would certainly be followed by war with Mexico. This was what the Southern conspirators wanted, and their subsequent action was thus narrated in a letter written a few years afterward by John Tyler, which is here published for the first time:

"Texas," wrote Mr. Tyler, "was the great theme that occupied me. The delegates to the Democratic Convention, or a very large majority of them, had been elected under implied pledges to sustain Van Buren. After his letter repudiating annexation, a revulsion had become obvious, but how far it was to operate it was not possible to say. A majority of the delegates at least were believed still to remain in his favor. If he was nominated the game to be played for Texas was all over. What was to be done?

"My friends," Mr. Tyler went on to say, "advised me to remain at rest, and take my chances in the Democratic Convention. It was impossible to do so. If I suffered my name to be used in that Convention, then I became bound to sustain the nomination, even if Mr. Van Buren was the nominee. This could not be. I chose to run no hazard, but to raise the banner of Texas, and convoke my friends to sustain it. This was but a few weeks before the meeting of the Convention. To my surprise, the notice which was thus issued brought together a thousand delegates, and from every State in the Union. Many called on

me on their way to Baltimore to receive my views. My instructions were, 'Go to Baltimore, make your nomination, then go home, and leave the thing to work its own results.' I said no more, and was obeyed. The Democratic Convention felt the move. A Texan man or defeat was the choice left, and they took a Texan man. My withdrawal at a suitable time took place, and the result was soon before the world. I acted to insure the success of a great measure, and I acted not altogether without effect. In so doing I kept my own secrets; to have divulged my purposes would have been to have defeated them."



THEODORE FRELINGHUYSEN.

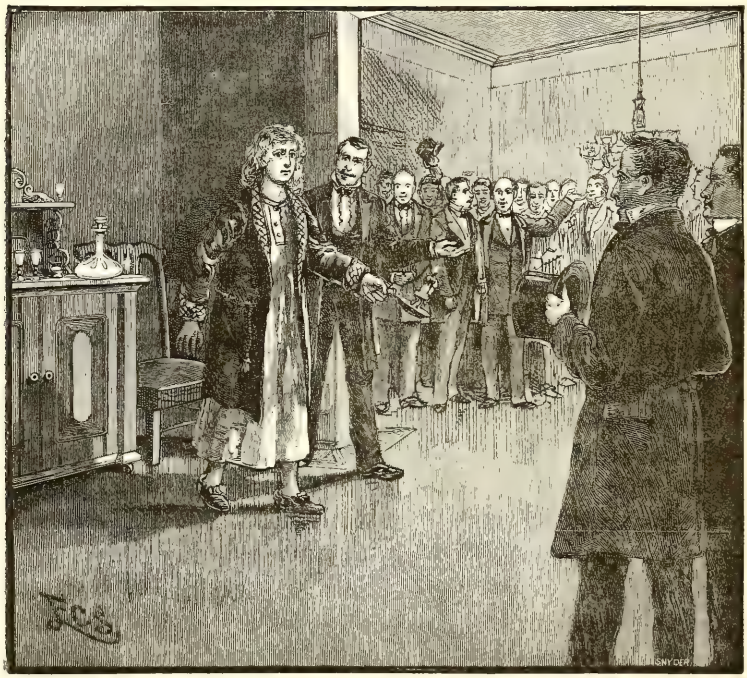
The National Whig Convention assembled at Baltimore, and Henry Clay was nominated with great enthusiasm, ex-Senator Theodore Frelinghuysen, of New Jersey, being nominated as Vice-President. The next day a hundred thousand Whigs, from every section of the Republic, met in mass convention at Baltimore, with music, banners, and badges, to ratify the ticket. Mr. Webster, with true magnanimity, was one of the speakers, and advocated the election of Clay and Frelinghuysen with all the strength of his eloquence. The Whigs were jubilant when their chosen leader again took the field, and the truants flocked back to the

standard which they had deserted to support John Tyler. Harmony once more prevailed among the leaders and in the ranks, and the Whig party was again in good working order.

Three weeks later the National Democratic Convention met at Baltimore and remained in session three days. A majority of the delegates advocated the nomination of ex-President Van Buren, but he was defeated by permitting his opponents to pass the two-thirds rule, and on the third day James K. Polk was nominated. Silas Wright was nominated as Vice-President, but he positively declined, saying to his friends that he did not propose to ride behind on the black pony [slavery] at the funeral of his slaughtered friend, Mr. Van Buren. Mr. George M. Dallas, of Pennsylvania, was then nominated.

Governor Fairfield, of Maine, on his return from Philadelphia on the first of June, 1844, whither he had gone as Chairman of a Committee of the Democratic Convention to inform Mr. Dallas of his nomination as Vice-President, gave an amusing account of the scene. The Committee reached Philadelphia about three o'clock in the morning, and were piloted to Mr. Dallas' house by his friend, Senator Robert J. Walker. Loud knocks at the door brought Mr. Dallas to his chamber window. Recognizing Mr. Walker, and fearing that his daughter, who was in Washington, was ill, he hastened down-stairs, half dressed and in slippers, when, to his utter amazement, in walked sixty or more gentlemen, two by two, with the tread of soldiers, passing him by and entering his front parlor, all maintaining the most absolute silence. Mr. Dallas, not having the slightest conception of their object, stood thunderstruck at the scene. Mr. Walker then led him into the

back parlor. "My dear Walker," said he, in amazement, "what is the matter?" "Wait one moment, if you please, Dallas, wait one moment, if you please." In a few moments the folding-doors connecting the parlors were thrown back, and in the front parlor (which had meanwhile been lighted up) Mr. Dallas saw



GEORGE M. DALLAS NOTIFIED OF HIS NOMINATION.

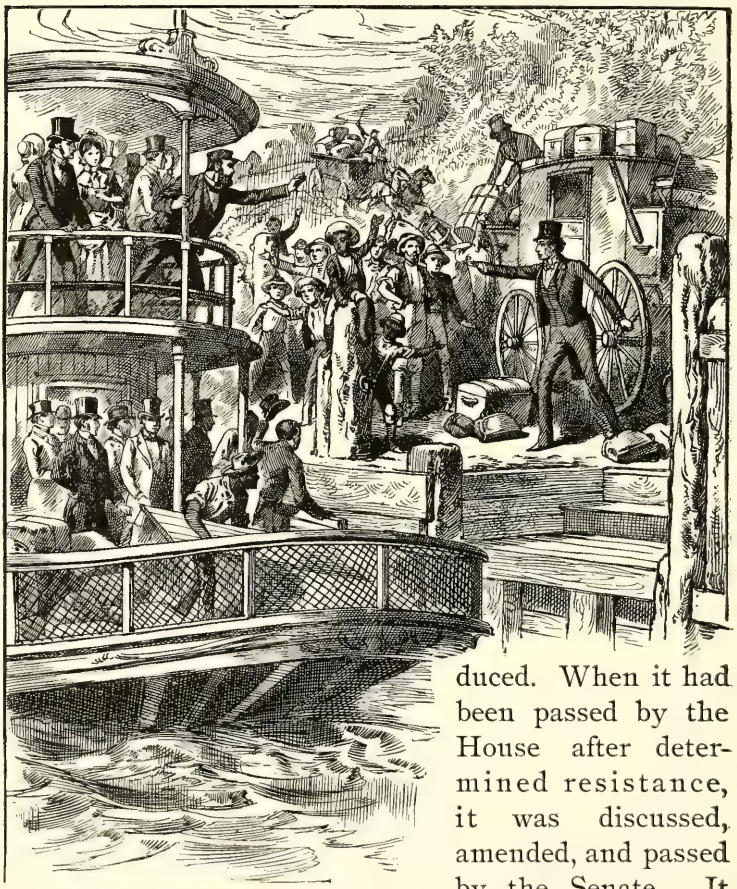
a semi-circle of gentlemen, who greeted him with applause. Governor Fairfield then stepped forward, and briefly informed Mr. Dallas what the action of the Convention had been. The candidate for Vice-President, who had recovered from his momentary surprise, eloquently acknowledged the compliment paid him, and promised to more formally reply by letter. He then

opened his sideboard, and all joined in pledging "success to the ticket."

Mr. Clay unfortunately wrote a Texas letter, which fell like a wet blanket upon the Whigs, and enabled the Democratic managers to deprive him of the vote of New York by organizing the Liberty party, which nominated James G. Birney, of Michigan, as President, and Thomas Morris, of Ohio, as Vice-President. This nomination received the support of the anti-slavery men, of many disappointed adherents of Mr. Van Buren, and of the anti-Masonic and anti-rent factions of the Whig party of New York. The consequence was that over sixty thousand votes were thrown away on Birney, nine-tenths of them being drawn from the Whig ranks, thus securing a complete triumph for the Democrats.

At the "birthnight ball," on the 22d of February, 1845, President Tyler was accompanied by President-elect Polk. Mrs. Madison also was present with Mrs. Alexander Hamilton, and the members of the Diplomatic Corps wore their court uniforms. A few nights afterward President Tyler gave a "parting ball" at the White House, his young and handsome wife receiving the guests with distinguished grace. Mr. Polk was prevented from attending by the indisposition of his wife, but the Vice-President-elect, Mr. Dallas, with his splendid crown of white hair, towered above all other guests except General Scott and "Long John" Wentworth. There was dancing in the East Room, Mrs. Tyler leading off in the first set of quadrilles with Mr. Wilkins, the Secretary of War, as her partner. This entertainment concluded the "Cavalier" reign within the White House, which was soon ruled with Puritan austerity by Mrs. Polk.

Near the close of the session of Congress with which the Administration of John Tyler terminated, a joint resolution legislating Texas into the Union was intro-



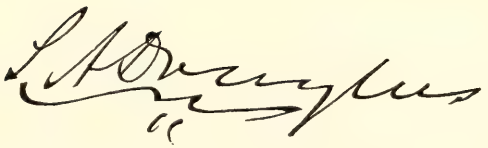
EX-PRESIDENT TYLER LEFT.

duced. When it had been passed by the House after determined resistance, it was discussed, amended, and passed by the Senate. It reached the President on the 2d of March, received his immediate approval, and the next day a messenger was started for Texas, to have it accepted, and thus secure annexation.

On the morning of the 4th of March, 1845, Mr.

Tyler left the White House, not caring to assist in the inauguration of his successor. As the Potomac steamer was about to swing away from the wharf, which was crowded with people who were glad to see the ex-President depart, he came along with his family, a squadron of colored servants, and a great lot of luggage. As they alighted from their carriages at the head of the wharf the whistle sounded, the boat's bell rang, and she began slowly to move away. Some one in the crowd sang out, "Hello! hello! Captain, hold on there, ex-President Tyler is coming. Hold on!" The captain, an old Clay Whig, standing near the stern of the boat on the upper deck, looked over the rail, saw the Presidential crowd coming, but pulled his engine bell violently and shouted, "Ex-President Tyler be dashed! let him stay." This scene was lithographed and copies hung for years in many of the saloons and public houses of Washington.

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STEPHEN ARNOLD DOUGLAS was born at Brandon, Vermont, April 23d, 1813; was a Representative in Congress from Illinois, 1843–1847; was United States Senator from 1847 until his death at Chicago, June 3d, 1861.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### RESTORATION OF THE DEMOCRATS.

INAUGURATION OF POLK—HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE—INAUGURATION BALLS—MRS. POLK — SECRETARY BUCHANAN — GOVERNOR MARCY, OF NEW YORK—COMPLETION OF THE CABINET—THE OREGON DIFFICULTY—THE MEXICAN WAR—A CHANGE OF ORGANIST.

JAMES KNOX POLK was inaugurated as the eleventh President of the United States on the 4th of March, 1845, a rainy, unpleasant day. Had any method of contesting a Presidential election been provided by the Constitution or the laws, the fraudulent means by which his election was secured would have been brought forward to prevent his taking his seat. But the Constitution had made no such provision, and Congress had not been disposed to interfere; so Mr. Polk was duly inaugurated with great pomp, under the direction of the dominant party. A prominent place was assigned in the inaugural procession for the Democratic associations of Washington and other cities. The pugilistic Empire Club from New York, led by Captain Isaiah Rynders, had with it a small cannon, which was fired at short intervals as the procession advanced.

The Chief Marshal of the procession having issued orders that no carriages should enter the Capitol grounds, the diplomats were forced to alight at a side gate in the rain, and to walk through the mud to the

Senate entrance, damaging their feathered chapeaux and their embroidered uniforms, to their great displeasure. Conspicuous in the group around the President was Vice-President Dallas, tall, erect, and dignified, with long, snow-white hair falling over his shoul-



JAMES KNOX POLK.

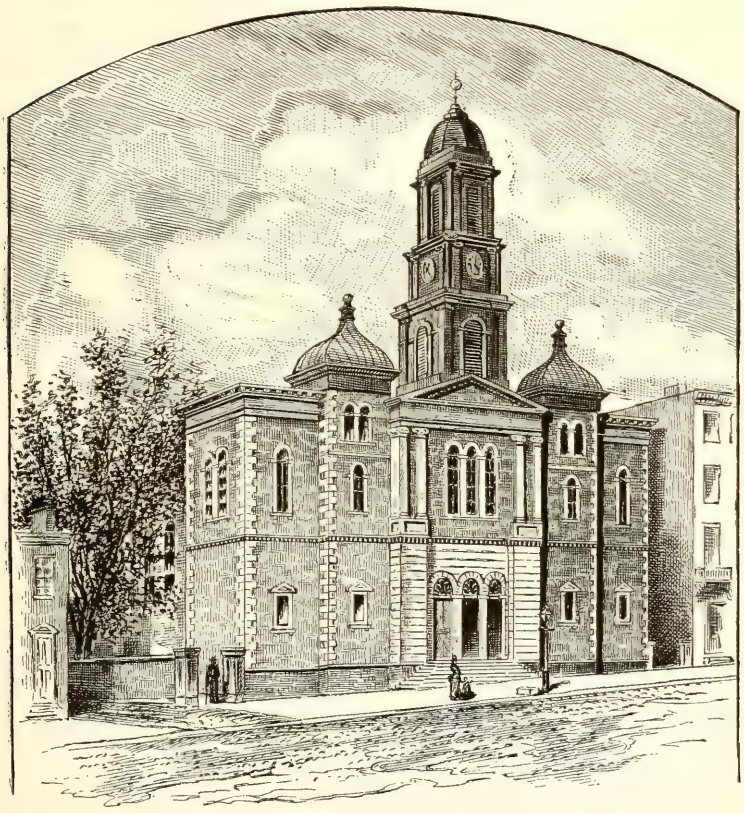
ders. The President-elect read his inaugural, which few heard, and when he had concluded Chief Justice Taney administered the oath of office. As Mr. Polk reverentially kissed the Bible, the customary salutes boomed forth at the Navy Yard and at the Arsenal.

The new President was then escorted to the White House, the rain having made Pennsylvania Avenue so slippery with mud that not a few of the soldiers fell ingloriously on the march.

The cry, "Who is James K. Polk?" raised by the Whigs when he was nominated, was unwarranted, for he was not an unknown man. He had been a member of the House from 1825 to 1839, Speaker from 1835 to 1837, and chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means during a portion of his membership. He had been a Jackson leader in the House, and as such he had manifested not only zeal and skill as a party manager, but also substantial qualities of a respectable order. It seems certain that Polk was selected by the Southern Democracy some time before the Convention met in 1844, and that he was heartily in sympathy with the movement for conquering a portion of Mexico, to be made into slave States. Polk entered heartily into this business, and worked harmoniously with the instigators of conquest, except that he became self-willed when his vanity was touched.

President Polk was a spare man, of unpretending appearance and middle stature, with a rather small head, a full, angular brow, penetrating dark gray eyes, and a firm mouth. His hair, which he wore long and brushed back behind his ears, was touched with silver when he entered the White House and was gray when he left it. He was a worthy and well-qualified member of the fraternity of Freemasons, and a believer in the creed of the Methodists, although, out of deference to the religious opinions of his wife, he attended worship with her at the First Presbyterian Church. Calm, cold, and intrepid in his moral character, he was ignorant of the beauty of moral uprightness in the conduct of public

affairs, but was ambitious of power and successful in the pursuit of it. He was very methodical and remarkably industrious, always finding time to listen patiently to the stories of those who came to him as

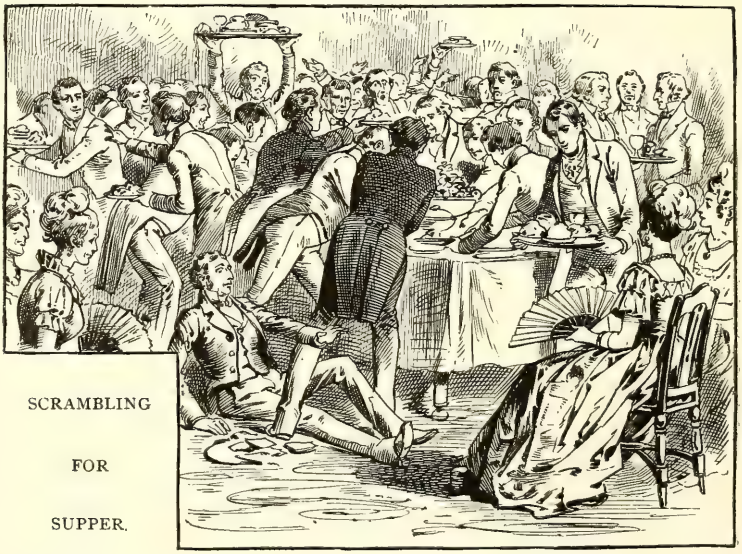


THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

petitioners for patronage and place. But his arduous labors impaired his health and doubtless shortened his life. Before his term of office had half expired his friends were pained to witness his shortened and

enfeebled step, and the air of languor and exhaustion which sat upon him.

There were two inauguration balls in honor of the new President's accession to power—one at ten dollars a ticket, and the other at two dollars. The ten-dollar ball was at Carusi's saloon, and was attended by the leaders of Washington society, the Diplomatic Corps, and many officers of the Army and Navy.



SCRAMBLING FOR SUPPER.

Madame de Bodisco, wife of the Russian Minister, in a superb court dress, which she had worn while on her bridal visit to St. Petersburg, attracted much attention, and contrasted strongly with Mrs. Polk, whose attire was very plain. The ball at the National Theatre was more democratic, and was attended by an immense crowd, whose fight for the supper was emblematical of the rush and scramble about to be made for the loaves and fishes of office. When the guests began to depart,

it was found that the best hats, cloaks, and canes had been taken early in the evening, and there was great grumbling. Commodore Elliot had his pocket picked at the White House on inauguration day, the thief depriving him of his wallet, which contained several valued relics. One was a letter from General Jackson, congratulating him on his restoration to his position in the service, and containing a lock of "Old Hickory's" hair; another was a letter from Mrs. Madison, inclosing a lock of Mr. Madison's hair.

Mrs. Polk was a strict Presbyterian, and she shunned what she regarded as "the vanities of the world" whenever it was possible for her to do so. She did not possess the queenly grace of Mrs. Madison or the warm-hearted hospitality of Mrs. Tyler, but she presided over the White House with great dignity. She was of medium height and size, with very black hair, dark eyes and complexion, and formal yet graceful deportment. At the inauguration of her husband she wore a black silk dress, a long black velvet cloak with a deep cape, trimmed with fringe and tassels, and a purple velvet bonnet, trimmed with satin ribbon. Her usual style of dress was rich, but not showy.

Mrs. Polk would not permit dancing at the White House, but she did all in her power to render the Administration popular. One morning a lady found her reading. "I have many books presented to me by their writers," said she, "and I try to read them all; at present this is not possible; but this evening the author of this book dines with the President, and I could not be so unkind as to appear wholly ignorant and unmindful of his gift." At one of her evening receptions a gentleman remarked, "Madame, you have a very genteel assemblage to-night." "Sir," replied Mrs.

Polk, with perfect good humor, but very significantly, "I have never seen it otherwise."

Mr. James Buchanan, the newly appointed Secretary of State, was at this time in the prime of life, and his stalwart frame, fair complexion, light blue eyes, courtly manners, and scrupulously neat attire prompted an English visitor, Mrs. Maury, to say that he resembled a British nobleman of the past generation, when the grave and dignified bearing of men in power was regarded as an essential attribute of their office. Although a bachelor, he kept house on F Street, next to the abode of John Quincy Adams, where his accomplished niece presided at his hospitable board. He faithfully carried out the foreign policy of President Polk, but never let pass an opportunity for advancing, with refreshing humility, his own claims to the succession. In a letter written to a friend he alluded to a prediction that he would be the next President, and went on to say: "I or any other man may disappear from the political arena without producing a ripple upon the surface of the deep and strong current which is sweeping the country to its destiny. Nothing has prevented me from removing myself from the list of future candidates for the Presidency, except the injury this might do to the Democratic cause in Pennsylvania. On this subject I am resolved, and whenever it may be proper I shall make known my resolution. Nothing on earth could induce me again to accept a Cabinet appointment." Yet never did a wily politician more industriously plot and plan to secure a nomination than Mr. Buchanan did, in his still-hunt for the Presidency.

William Learned Marcy, the Secretary of War, was the "wheel-horse" of President Polk's Cabinet.

Heavily built, rather sluggish in his movements, and always absorbed with some subject, he was not what is generally termed "companionable," and neither bores nor office-seekers regarded him as an amiable man. He used to write his most important dispatches in the library of his own house. When thus engaged he would at once, after breakfast, begin his work and write till nearly noon, when he would go to the Department, receive calls, and attend to the regular routine duties of his position. During hours of composition he was so completely engrossed with the subject that persons might enter, go out, or talk in the same room without in the least obtaining his notice. He usually sat in his dressing-gown, with an old red handkerchief on the table before him, and one could judge of the relative activity of his mind by the frequency of his application to the snuff-box. In truth, he was an inveterate snuff-taker, and his immoderate consumption of that article appeared to have injuriously affected his voice.



WILLIAM LEARNED MARCY.

President Polk, anxious to placate his defeated rival, Mr. Van Buren, tendered the appointment of Secretary of the Treasury to Silas Wright. He declined it, having been elected Governor of the State of New York,

but recommended for the position Mr. A. C. Flagg. Governor Marcy objected to the appointment of Mr. Flagg, then to the appointment of Mr. George Bancroft, the historian, and finally accepted himself the place of Secretary of War. Mr. Robert J. Walker, a Pennsylvanian by birth and a Mississippian by adoption, who had in the United States Senate advocated the admission of Texas and opposed the protection of American industries by a high tariff, was made Secretary of the Treasury. Mr. George Bancroft was appointed Secretary of the Navy, and Cave Johnson, of Tennessee, Postmaster-General.



ROBERT J. WALKER.

Mr. John Y. Mason, who had been the Secretary of the Navy in Tyler's Cabinet, was retained by Polk as his Attorney-General, having made earnest appeals that he might not be disturbed. He wrote to an influential friend at Washington that he desired to remain in office on account of his financial wants. "Imprudence amounting to infatuation," he went on to say, "while in Congress, embarrassed me, and I am barely recovering from it. The place is congenial to my feelings, and the salary will assist Virginia land and negroes in educating six daughters. Although I still own a large estate, and am perfectly temperate in my

habits, I have felt that the folly of my conduct in another respect may have led to the report that I was a sot—an unfounded rumor, which originated with a Richmond paper." Governor Marcy used to joke Mr. Mason a good deal on the forwardness of the Old Dominion, the mother of Presidents, in urging the claims of her children for Federal office—a propensity which was amusingly illustrated at a private dinner where they were both in attendance. "How strange it is, Mason," said he, "that out of the thousands of fat appointments we have had to make, there is not one that Virginia does not furnish a candidate for, and that every candidate is backed up by the strongest testimonials that he was expressly educated for that particular post!" Mason bore the joke very well, contenting himself with the observation that the people of the United States seemed to know where to look for great men.

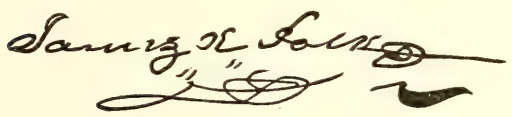
Mr. Polk had been elected President on the platform of "the whole of Oregon or none," and "54° 40′, or fight." But Mr. McLean, who was sent to England, negotiated a treaty fixing the boundary at 49°, and "54° 40′" was abandoned without the promised fight. Another troublesome legacy inherited by John Tyler was not so easily arranged, and the Mexican War was inaugurated. To the more intelligent portion of the Northern Whigs the contest was repulsive, and the manner in which it was used for the advancement of Democratic politicians was revolting. But few forgot their allegiance to this country in the face of the enemy. Congress, repeatedly appealed to by the President, voted men and money without stint to secure the national success and to maintain the national honor. Whig States, which, like Massachusetts, had

no sympathy for the war, contributed the bravest of their sons, many of whom, like a son of Daniel Webster, fell victims to Mexican malaria or Mexican bullets.

While President Polk endeavored to gratify each of the component factions of the Democratic party in the composition of his Cabinet, he ruthlessly deposed the veteran Francis P. Blair from the editorship of the *Globe* to gratify the chivalry of South Carolina, who made it the condition upon which he could receive the electoral vote of their State, then in the hands of the General Assembly, and controlled by the politicians. Blair & Rives had loaned ten thousand dollars to General Jackson, who was very indignant when he learned that his old friends were to be shelved, but the Nullifiers were inexorable. The *Globe* ceased to be the editorial organ of the Administration, and "Father Ritchie," who had for many years edited the Richmond *Inquirer*, was invited to Washington, where he established the *Union*, which became the mouthpiece of President Polk. "The *Globe*," says Colonel Benton, "was sold and was paid for; it was paid for out of public money—the same fifty thousand dollars which were removed to the village bank at Middletown, in the interior of Pennsylvania. Three annual installments made the payment, and the Treasury did not reclaim the money for three years."

The first congressional assembly attended by President Polk was graced by the presence of General Felix Grundy McConnell, of Alabama, who appeared arrayed in a blue swallow-tailed coat, light cassimere pantaloons, and a scarlet waistcoat. His female acquaintances at Washington not being very numerous, he had invited to accompany him two good-looking

French milliner girls from a shop in the lower story of the house in which he boarded. The young women were dressed as near to the Parisian style of ball dress as their means would permit, and the trio attracted much attention as they promenaded the hall. When the President arrived, the General marched directly to him, and exclaimed in his stentorian voice: "Mr. Polk, allow me the honor of introducing to you my beautiful young friend, Mamselle—Mamselle—Mamselle—*parley vous Francais*—whose name I have forgotten!" Then, turning to the other lady, he asked, "Will you introduce your friend?" The President, seeing General Mac's embarrassment, relieved him by shaking hands cordially with each of the young ladies.



JAMES KNOX POLK was born in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, November 2d, 1795; was a Representative in Congress from Tennessee, 1825–1839; was Governor of Tennessee, 1839; was President of the United States, 1845–1849, and died at Nashville, Tennessee, June 15th, 1849.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### DEATH OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

WASHINGTON SOCIETY—AN OLD WHIG SUPPER—DEATH OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS—ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN THE HOUSE—JEFFERSON DAVIS A REPRESENTATIVE—THE DEMOCRATIC NOMINATION—LEWIS CASS, OF MICHIGAN—THE WHIG CONVENTION—DANIEL WEBSTER AND HENRY CLAY—NOMINATION OF GENERAL TAYLOR—LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE—THE FREE-SOIL MOVEMENT—INCEPTION OF THE GREAT CONSPIRACY.

THE metropolis was not very gay during the latter portion of Mr. Polk's Administration. There were the usual receptions at the White House, and at several of the foreign legations the allowance of "table money" was judiciously expended, but there were not many large evening parties or balls. One notable social event was the marriage of Colonel Benton's daughter Sarah to Mr. Jacob, of Louisville. The bridegroom's family was related to the Taylors and the Clays, so Henry Clay, who had been re-elected to the Senate, was present, and escorted the bride to the supper-table. There was a large attendance of Congressmen, diplomats, and officials, but the absence of officers of the army and navy, generally so prominent at a Washington entertainment, was noticeable. They were in Mexico.

Another interesting entertainment was given by Colonel Seaton, at his mansion on E Street, to the Whig members of Congress and the journalists. The

first homage of nearly all, as they entered, was paid to John Quincy Adams, who sat upon a sofa, his form slightly bowed by time, his eyes weeping, and a calm seriousness in his expression. Daniel Webster was not present, having that day received intelligence of the death of his son Edward, who was major of a Massachusetts regiment, and died in Mexico of camp-fever. Henry Clay, however, was there, with kind words and pleasant smiles for all his friends. Crittenden, Corwin, and other Whig Senatorial paladins were present, and Mr. Speaker Winthrop, that perfect gentleman and able presiding officer, headed a host of talented Representatives. Commodore Stockton and General Jones represented the Army and Navy, while Erastus Brooks and Charles Lanman appeared for the press. There was a sumptuous collation, with much drinking of healths and many pledges to the success of the Whig cause.



ROBERT F. STOCKTON.

The reunion at Colonel Seaton's was on Friday night, February 18th, 1848. The following Sunday John Quincy Adams attended public worship at the Capitol, and on Monday, the 21st, he was, as usual, in his seat when the House was called to order. During the preliminary business he was engaged in copying a

poetical invocation to the muse of history for one of the officials, and he appeared to be in ordinarily good health. A resolve of thanks to the generals of the Mexican War came up, and the clerk had read, "Resolved by the House that"—when he was arrested by the cry of "Look to Mr. Adams!" Mr. David Fisher,



"THE LAST OF EARTH."

of Ohio, who occupied the desk on Mr. Adams' right, saw him rise as if he intended to speak; then clutch his desk with a convulsive effort, and sink back into his chair. Mr. Fisher caught him in his arms, and in an instant Dr. Fries and Dr. Nes, both members, were at his side.

It was a solemn moment, for a cry went from more

than one, "Mr. Adams is dying!" It was thought that, like Pitt, he would give up the ghost, "with harness on," on the spot which his eloquence had hallowed. "Stand back!' "Give him air!" "Remove him!" Every one seemed panic-struck except Mr. Speaker Winthrop, who quietly adjourned the House, and had his insensible colleague removed on a sofa—first into the rotunda, and then into the Speaker's room. Cupping, mustard poultices, and friction were resorted to, and about an hour after his attack Mr. Adams said, "This is the last of earth, but I am content." He then fell into a deep slumber, from which he never awoke. Mrs. Adams and other relatives were with him, and among the visitors was Henry Clay, who stood for some time with the old patriarch's hand clasped in his, and gazed intently on the calm but vacant countenance, his own eyes filled with tears. Mr. Adams lingered until the evening of the 23d of February, when he breathed his last. The funeral services were very imposing, and a committee of one from each State accompanied the remains to Boston, where they lay in state at Faneuil Hall, and were then taken to Quincy for interment. The Committee returned to Washington enthusiastic over the hospitalities extended to them while they were in Massachusetts.

Abraham Lincoln was a member of the last Congress during the Polk Administration. He made no mark as a legislator, but he established his reputation as a story-teller, and he was to be found every morning in the post-office of the House charming a small audience with his quaint anecdotes. Among other incidents of his own life which he used to narrate was his military service in the Black Hawk War, when he was a cap-

tain of volunteers. He was mustered into service by Jefferson Davis, then a lieutenant of dragoons, stationed at Fort Dixon, which was near the present town of Dixon, Illinois, and was under the command of Colonel Zachary Taylor. Mr. Lincoln served only one term, and before its expiration he began to take steps for appointment as Commissioner of the General Land-office, two years afterward, should the Whigs then come into power. A number of prominent Whig Senators and Representatives indorsed his application, but he was not successful.

Mr. Lincoln made but one long speech while a member of the House of Representatives, and that was a reply to Mr. Iverson, a Democratic Representative from Georgia, who denounced the Whigs for having deserted their financial, internal improvement, and tariff principles to take "shelter under the military coat tails of General Taylor," who was evidently to be their Presidential candidate. Mr. Lincoln had the floor for the next speech, and with his characteristic readiness of wit, made a telling reply.

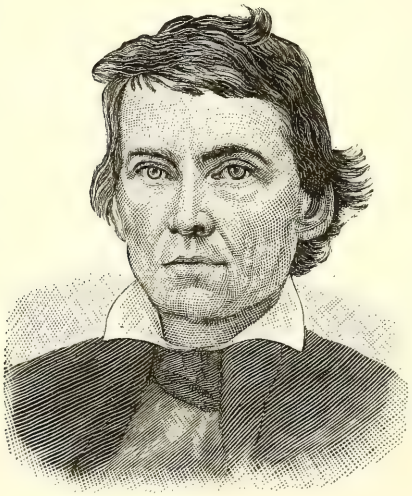
Jefferson Davis was a Representative from Mississippi until he resigned to accept the command of a regiment of riflemen, which rendered gallant services at Buena Vista, under his father-in-law, General Taylor, with whom he was not at that time on speaking terms. In appearance his erect bearing recalled his service as an officer of dragoons, while his square shoulders and muscular frame gave proof of a training at West Point. His high forehead was shaded by masses of dark hair, in which the silvery threads began to show; his eyes were a bluish-gray, his cheek-bones prominent, his nose aquiline, and he had a large, expressive mouth. He was an ardent supporter of



MEETING THE CHARGE OF THE MEXICAN LANCERS AT BUENA VISTA.

State sovereignty and of Southern rights, and he was very severe on those Congressmen from the slave-holding States who were advocates of the Union, especially Mr. A. H. Stephens, whom he denounced as "the little pale star from Georgia."

The Democratic National Convention met at Baltimore on the 22d of May, 1848. There was a prolonged contest over the rival claims of delegates from New York, terminated by the admission of the "hards." General James M. Commander, the solitary delegate from South Carolina, was authorized to cast the nine votes of that State. The two-thirds rule was adopted, and on the fourth day of the convention, Lewis Cass, of Michigan, was nominated on the fourth ballot, defeating James Buchanan and Levi Woodbury. Having nominated a Northern candidate, a Southern platform was adopted, which covered the entire ground of non-interference with the rights of slave-holders, either in the States or Territories.



ALEXANDER H. STEVENS.

General Cass was then in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and had passed forty years in the public service. His knowledge was ample but not profound. He was ignorant on no subject, and was deeply versed on none. The world to him was but a playhouse,

and that drama with him was best which was best performed.

When the Whig National Convention met at Philadelphia, on the 7th of June, there was a bitter feeling between the respective friends of Webster and Clay, but they were all doomed to disappointment. The Northern delegates to the Whig National Convention might have nominated either Webster, Clay, Scott, or Corwin, as they had a majority of fifty-six over the delegates from the Southern States, and cast twenty-nine votes more than was necessary to choose a candidate. But they refused to unite on any one, and on the fourth ballot sixty-nine of them voted with the Southern Whigs and secured the nomination of Zachary Taylor. While the friends of Mr. Clay made a desperate rally in his behalf, knowing that it was his last chance, some of those who had smarted under the lash which he wielded so unsparingly in the Senate rejoiced over his defeat. "Thank Providence!" exclaimed ex-Senator Archer, of Virginia, "we have got rid of the old tyrant at last."

As the Whig National Convention had adjourned without passing a single declaration of the party's principles, General Taylor's letter of acceptance was awaited with intense interest. It was believed that he would outline some policy which would be accepted and which would unite the Whig party. A month elapsed, and no letter of acceptance was received by Governor Morehead, who had presided over the Convention, but the Postmaster at Baton Rouge, where General Taylor lived, addressed the Postmaster-General a letter, saying that with the report for the current quarter from that office, two bundles of letters were forwarded for the Dead-Letter Office, they having been

declined on account of the non-payment of the postage by the senders. It was in the ten-cent and non-prepayment time. Of the forty-eight letters thus forwarded to the Dead-Letter Office, the Baton Rouge Postmaster said a majority were addressed to General Taylor, who had declined to pay the postage on them and take them out of the office, because his mail expenses had become burdensome. The General had since become aware that some of the letters were of importance, and asked for their return. In due course, the letters were sent back to Baton Rouge, and among them was Governor Morehead's letter notifying the General of the action of the Philadelphia Convention.

General Taylor's letter of acceptance was thus dated a month and five days after the letter of notification had been written. It was "short and sweet." He expressed his thanks for the nomination, said he did not seek it, and that if he were elected President, for which position he did not think he possessed the requisite qualifications, he would do his best. He discussed nothing, laid down no principles, and gave no indications of the course he would pursue. Thurlow Weed, who had assumed the direction of the Whig campaign, was not satisfied with this letter, and sent the draft of another one, more explicit, and indorsed by Mr. Fillmore. This General Taylor had copied, and signed it as a letter addressed to his kinsman, Captain Allison. In it he pledged himself fully to Whig principles, and it was made the basis of an effective campaign.

Mr. Webster, who at first denounced the nomination as one "not fit to be made," was induced, by the payment of a considerable sum of money, to make a speech in favor of the ticket. Nathaniel P. Willis

wrote a stirring campaign song, and at the request of Thurlow Weed, the writer of these reminiscences wrote a campaign life of the General, large editions of which were published at Boston and at Albany for gratuitous distribution. It ignored the General's views on the anti-slavery question. Meanwhile, the Massachusetts Abolitionists and ultra-Webster men, with the Barnburner wing of the Democratic party in New York, and several other disaffected factions, met in convention at Buffalo. They there nominated Martin Van Buren for President and Mr. Charles Francis Adams for Vice-President, and adopted as a motto, "Free Speech, Free Soil, Free Labor, and Free Men." This party attracted enough votes from the Democratic ticket in the State of New York to secure the triumph of the Whigs, and Martin Van Buren, who had been defeated by the Southern Democrats, had in return the satisfaction of effecting their defeat.

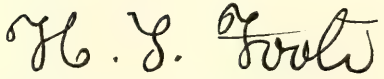


THURLOW WEED.

Mr. Calhoun, soured by his successive failures, but not instructed by them, sought revenge. "The last days of Mr. Polk's Administration," says Colonel Benton, "were witness to an ominous movement, nothing less than nightly meetings of large numbers of members from the slave States to consider the state of

things between the North and the South, to show the aggressions and encroachments (as they were called) of the former upon the latter, to show the incompatibility of their union, and to devise measures for the defense and protection of the South."

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HENRY STUART FOOTE was born in Fauquier County, Virginia, September 20th, 1800; commenced the practice of law at Tuscumbia, Alabama, and removed to Mississippi; was United States Senator, 1847–1852; was Governor of Mississippi, 1852–1854, and died May 19th, 1880.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### MAKING THE MOST OF POWER.

PRESIDENT TAYLOR AND HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY—SELECTION OF THE TAYLOR CABINET—THE TAYLOR FAMILY—JEFFERSON DAVIS—INAUGURATION CEREMONIES—OFFICE SEEKERS—PATRONAGE AND SPOILS—THE GALPHIN, GARDINER, AND OTHER CLAIMS—THE TAYLOR ADMINISTRATION—THE WHITE HOUSE.

GENERAL ZACHARY TAYLOR was, of all who have filled the Presidential chair by the choice of the people, the man least competent to perform its duties. He had been placed before his countrymen as a candidate in spite of his repeated avowals of incapacity, inexperience, and repugnance to all civil duties. Although sixty-four years of age, he had never exercised the right of suffrage, and he was well aware that he was elected solely because of his military prowess. But no sooner did he learn that he had been chosen President than he displayed the same invincible courage, practical sense, and indomitable energy in the discharge of his new and arduous civil duties which had characterized his military career.

The President-elect was fortunate in having as a companion, counselor, and friend Colonel William Wallace Bliss, who had served as his chief of staff in the Mexican campaign, and who became the husband of his favorite daughter, Miss Betty. Colonel Bliss was the son of Captain Bliss, of the regular army, and after having been reared in the State of New York he

was graduated at West Point, where he served afterward as acting professor of mathematics.

On his way to Washington from his Louisiana plantation, General Taylor visited Frankfort, and personally invited Mr. John J. Crittenden, then Governor of



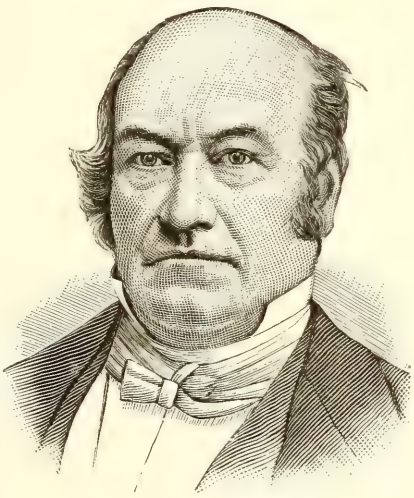
ZACHARY TAYLOR.

Kentucky, to become his Secretary of State. Governor Crittenden declined, and General Taylor then telegraphed to Mr. John M. Clayton, of Delaware, tendering him the position, which that gentleman promptly accepted.

Mr. Abbott Lawrence, of Boston, solicited the ap-

pointment of Secretary of the Treasury, and was offered the Navy Department, which he declined. Mr. Robert Toombs, supported by Representative Stephens and Senator Dawson, succeeded in having Mr. George W. Crawford, of Georgia, appointed Secretary of War.

Mr. William M. Meredith, of Pennsylvania, was rather forced upon General Taylor as Secretary of the Treasury by Mr. Clayton and other Whigs, partly on account of his acknowledged talents, but chiefly to exclude objectionable Pennsylvanians, among them Mr. Josiah Randall, who, more than any other, had contributed to the nomination and election of the General. A contest between Messrs. Corwin and Vinton, of Ohio, for a seat in the Cabinet was settled by the appointment of Mr. Thomas Ewing, of that State, as Secretary of the Interior. Mr. Jacob Collamer, of Vermont, who had been an unsuccessful competitor with Mr. Upham for a seat in the Senate, and had been recommended by the Legislature of his State as Attorney-General, was made Postmaster-General.



THOMAS EWING.

General Taylor came to Washington impressed with the idea that he was politically indebted to George Lunt, of Massachusetts, and William Ballard Preston, of Virginia. He appointed Mr. Lunt District Attor-

ney for the district of Massachusetts, and it was soon understood that he proposed to invite Mr. Preston to a seat in his Cabinet as Attorney-General. The Whig Senators remonstrated, urging Preston's lack of great legal ability and learning, but all to no purpose. Finally Senator Archer, of Virginia, called and asked if there was any foundation for the report that his friend Preston was to be made Attorney-General.



REVERDY JOHNSON.

"Yes!" answered General Taylor, "I have determined on that appointment." "Are you aware, General," said the Senator, "that the Attorney-General must represent the Government in the Supreme Court?" "Of course!" responded the General. "But do you know that he must there meet Daniel Webster, Reverdy Johnson, and other leading lawyers?" "Certainly. What of that?" "Nothing, General, except that they will make a blank fool of your Attorney-General." The Virginia Senator then took his leave, and the next morning's papers contained the announcement that the President had decided to appoint Mr. Preston Secretary of the Navy, and Mr. Reverdy Johnson Attorney-General.

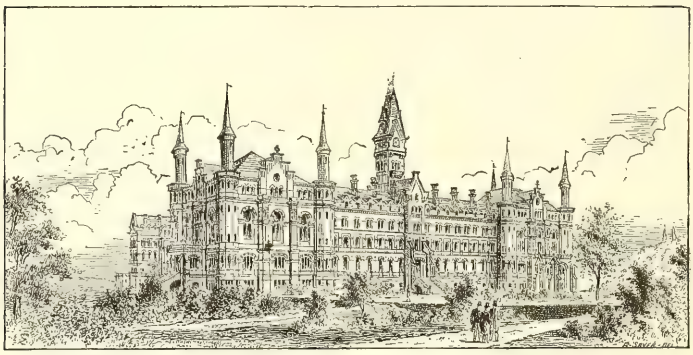
Mrs. Taylor regretted the election of her husband, and came to Washington with a heavy heart. She

was a native of Calvert County, Maryland, and was born on the estate where the father of Mrs. John Quincy Adams had formerly resided. Her father, Mr. Walter Smith, was a highly respectable farmer, and her brother, Major Richard Smith, of the Marine Corps, was well remembered at Washington for his gallant bearing and his social qualities. The eldest daughter of General Taylor had married Mr. Jefferson Davis. A second daughter was the wife of Dr. Wood, of the army, who was at that time stationed at Baltimore, as was General Taylor's brother, Colonel Taylor. Mrs. Taylor, with her younger daughter, Mrs. Bliss, went directly from Louisiana to Baltimore some weeks prior to the inauguration. They broke up housekeeping at Baton Rouge, and took with them William Oldham, a faithful colored man, who had been the body-servant of General Taylor for many years, the parade horse, "Old Whitey," which he had ridden in the Mexican campaign, and a favorite dog.

General Taylor was inaugurated on Monday, March 5th. He was escorted from Willard's Hotel by an imposing procession, headed by twelve volunteer companies. The President-elect rode in an open carriage drawn by four gray horses, and he was joined at the Irving House by President Polk, who sat at his right hand. One hundred young gentlemen, residents of the District of Columbia, mounted on spirited horses, formed a body-guard, and kept the crowd from pressing around the President's carriage. Then came the "Rough-and-Ready" clubs of Washington, Georgetown, Alexandria, and Baltimore, with banners, badges, and music, while the students of the Georgetown College brought up the rear.

The personal appearance of General Taylor as he

read his inaugural address from a platform erected in front of the eastern portico of the Capitol was not imposing. His figure was somewhat portly, and his legs were short; his thin, gray hair was unbrushed; his whiskers were of the military cut then prescribed; his features were weather-bronzed and care-furrowed, and he read almost inaudibly. It was evident, however, that he was a popular favorite, and when he had concluded the vociferous cheering of the assembled



NEW COLLEGE OF GEORGETOWN.

thousands was answered by the firing of cannon and the music of the bands. His praises were on all lips, and his soubriquets of "Rough and Ready" and "Old Zach." were sounded with all honor.

The inaugural message showed that General Taylor regarded the Union as in danger, and that he intended to use every possible exertion for its preservation. Mr. Calhoun had requested, through Mr. Clayton, that nothing should be said in the inaugural on this subject, which had prompted the addition of a paragraph, in which the incoming President declared that a dissolution of the Union would be the greatest of calamities,

and went on to say: "Whatever dangers may threaten it, I shall stand by it, and maintain it in its integrity, to the full extent of the obligations imposed and the power conferred upon me by the Constitution."

In December, 1849, when Congress assembled, the President aroused the violent opposition of Southern members by recommending, in his message, that California be admitted as a free State, and that the remaining Territories be allowed to form Constitutions to suit themselves. So indignant were some of the Southerners that the dissolution of the Union was openly threatened. To allay this agitation Clay's compromise measures were proposed, but Taylor did not live to see the bill passed.

The horde of office-seekers which invaded Washington after the inauguration of President Taylor recalled the saying of John Randolph, when it was asserted that the patronage of the Federal Government was overrated; "I know," said the sarcastic Virginian, "that it may be overrated; I know that we cannot give to those who apply offices equal to their expectations; and I also know that with one bone I can call five hundred dogs." The Democratic motto, that "To the victors belong the spoils," was adopted by the Taylor Administration. Unexceptionable men were removed from office, that their places might be filled with officers of Rough and Ready clubs or partisan orators. Veterans like General Armstrong, and even the gifted Hawthorne, were "rotated" without mercy from the offices which they held. In the Post-Office Department alone, where Mr. Fitz Henry Warren, as Assistant Postmaster-General, worked the political guillotine, there were three thousand four hundred and six removals during the first year of the Taylor Adminis-

tration, besides many hundred clerks and employees in the post-offices of the larger cities.

In the dispensation of "patronage" there was a display of shameless nepotism. A brother-in-law of Senator Webster was made Navy Agent at New York. Sons of Senators Crittenden, Clay, and Davis received important appointments abroad, and the son-in-law of Senator Calhoun was retained in the diplomatic service. Two sons-in-law of Senator Benton were offered high places. A nephew of Senator Truman Smith was made one of the United States Judges in Minnesota, and a nephew of Secretary Clayton was made purser at the Washington Navy Yard. The assurance of the President that he had "no friends to reward" was apparently forgotten, and he was hedged in by a little circle of executive councilors, who ruled all things.

While the Administration was profligate in its abuse of patronage, the conduct of several of the Secretaries was such as to give the President great uneasiness as he became acquainted with what was going on. Old claims were revived, approved by the Secretaries, and paid. Prominent among them was the Galphin claim, the Chickasaw claim, the De la Francia claim, the Gardiner claim, and many others. From the Galphin claim Mr. Crawford, Secretary of War, received as his share one hundred and fifteen thousand dollars. The lawyers in Congress declared that the Secretary acted professionally, but others censured him severely. Judge Cartter, then a Representative from Ohio, was severe in his comments on the monstrous corruption of the allowance of interest, the payment of which he said that he disliked "both as an exaction on the part of the capitalists, and on account of its origin with the Jews, who killed the Saviour."

President Taylor, although a Southerner by birth and a slave-owner, took prompt steps to thwart the schemes of Mr. Calhoun and his fellow-conspirators. Military officers were ordered to California, Utah, and New Mexico, which had no governments but lynch law; and the people of the last-named province, which had been settled two hundred years before Texas asserted her independence, were assured that her domain would be guaranteed by the United States against the claim of the Lone Star State.

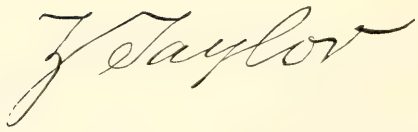


PRESIDENT TAYLOR ON THE STREET.

Socially, President Taylor enjoyed himself, and he used to take morning walks through the streets of Washington, wearing a high black silk hat perched on the back of his head, and a suit of black broadcloth, much too large for him, but made in obedience to his orders, that he might be comfortable. Mrs. Taylor used to sit patiently all day in her room, plying her knitting-needles, and occasionally, it was said, smoking her pipe. Mrs. Bliss was an excellent housekeeper,

and the introduction of gas into the Executive Mansion, with new furniture and carpets, enabled her to give it a more creditable appearance. It was said that she did the honors of the establishment "with the artlessness of a rustic belle and the grace of a duchess."

General Taylor found it difficult to accustom himself to the etiquette and the restraint of his new position. One day when the bachelor ex-Secretary of State called with a number of fair Pennsylvania friends to present them to the President, General Taylor remarked, "Ah! Mr. Buchanan, you always pick out the prettiest ladies!" "Why, Mr. President," was the courtly reply, "I know that your taste and mine agree in that respect." "Yes," said General Taylor, "but I have been so long among Indians and Mexicans that I hardly know how to behave myself, surrounded by so many lovely women."



ZACHARY TAYLOR was born in Orange County, Virginia, November 24th, 1784; never cast a vote or held a civil office until he was inaugurated as President, March 5th, 1849; died at the White House, after a few days' illness, July 9th, 1850.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### THE GREAT COMPROMISE DEBATE.

STORMY SCENES AT THE CAPITOL—CRIMINATION AND RECRIMINATION—TAYLOR'S ONLY MESSAGE—RETURN OF MR. CLAY TO THE SENATE—THE GREAT COMPROMISE DEBATE—WEBSTER'S SEVENTH OF MARCH SPEECH—THE LAST DAYS OF CALHOUN—JEFFERSON DAVIS' LEADERSHIP—JOHN P. HALE, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

THE Thirty-first Congress, which met on the first Monday in the December following the inauguration of President Taylor, contained many able statesmen of national prominence. The organization of the House was a difficult task, nine "free-soil" or anti-slavery Whigs from the North, and six "State-rights" or pro-slavery Whigs from the South, refusing to vote for that accomplished gentleman, Mr. Robert C. Winthrop, who was the Whig candidate for Speaker. On the first ballot, Howell Cobb, of Georgia, had one hundred and three votes, against ninety-six votes for Robert C. Winthrop, eight votes for David Wilmot, six votes for Meredith P. Gentry, two votes for Horace Mann, and a number of scattering votes. The tellers announced that there was no choice, and the balloting was continued day after day, amid great and increasing excitement. After the thirty-ninth ballot, Mr. Winthrop withdrew from the contest, expressing his belief that the peace and safety of the Union demanded that an organization of some sort should be effected without delay.

The Southern Whigs who had opposed Mr. Winthrop were vehement and passionate in their denunciation of the North. "The time has come," said Mr. Toombs, his black, uncombed hair standing out from his massive head, as if charged with electricity, his eyes glowing like coals of fire, and his sentences rattling forth like volleys of musketry—"the time has come," said he, "when I shall not only utter my opinions, but make them the basis of my political action here. I do not, then, hesitate to avow before this House and the country, and in the presence of the living God, that if, by your legislation, you seek to drive us from the Territories of California and New Mexico, and to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, I am for disunion; and if my physical courage be equal to the maintenance of my convictions of right and duty, I will devote all I am and all I have on earth to its consummation."



HOWELL COBB.

Such inflammatory remarks provoked replies, and after a heated debate Mr. Duer, of New York, remarked that he "would never, under any circumstances, vote to put a man in the Speaker's chair who would, in any event, advocate or sanction a dissolution of the Union." This brought a dozen Southerners to their feet with

angry exclamations, and Mr. Bayly, of Virginia, who was near Mr. Duer, said, "There are no disunionists." "There are!" exclaimed Mr. Duer. "Name one!" shouted Mr. Bayly. At that moment Mr. Meade, of Virginia, rose and passed directly before Mr. Duer, who pointed to him and shouted, "There's one!" "It is false!" replied Mr. Meade, angrily. "You lie, sir!" responded Mr. Duer, in tones which rang through the hall; and, drawing himself up, he stood unmoved, while his political friends and foes clustered angrily about him, every man of them talking and gesticulating most furiously.

Fortunately, Mr. Nathan Sergeant (known as a newspaper correspondent over the signature of Oliver Oldschool), who was the Sergeant-at-Arms of the House, was in his seat at the Speaker's right hand. Seizing the "mace," which represents the Roman fasces, or bundle of rods, bound by silver bands and surmounted by an eagle with outstretched wings, which is the symbol of the authority of the House, he hastened to Mr. Duer and stood at his side, as if to protect him. His official interposition was immediately respected by all concerned in the disorder, and even the most tumultuous began at once to subside, so that no forcible measures were needed to prevent further violence.

Quiet was restored, and the excited Representatives, one by one, obeyed the sharp raps of the Speaker's gavel, accompanied by the peremptory order, "Gentlemen will take their seats." Mr. Duer, who had recovered his usual composure, then addressed the Chair, and having been recognized, apologized to the House for having been provoked into the use of the unparliamentary expression, but justified himself by referring to a speech which Mr. Meade had just made and printed,

which contained disunion sentiments. Mr. Meade promptly challenged Mr. Duer, who showed no indisposition to fight, but with some difficulty friends secured an amicable settlement of the quarrel.

Finally, after three weeks of angry recrimination, it was voted that a plurality should elect, and on the sixty-second ballot Mr. Howell Cobb, of Georgia, having received one hundred and two votes against one hundred votes for Mr. Winthrop, was declared the Speaker of the House. He did not have that sense of personal dignity and importance which belonged to Sir John Falstaff by reason of his knighthood, but he displayed the same rich exuberance of animal enjoyment, the same roguish twinkle of the eye, and the same indolence which characterized the fat Knight.

President Taylor's first and only message to Congress was transmitted on the Monday following the organization of the House, December 24th, and the printed copies first distributed contained the sentence, "We are at peace with all the nations of the world and the rest of mankind." A revised edition was soon printed, in which the corrected sentence read, "We are at peace with all the nations of the world, and seek to maintain our cherished relations of amity with them." The blunder caused much diversion among the Democrats, and greatly annoyed Colonel Bliss, who, as the President's private secretary, had superintended the publication of the message. The message contained no allusion to the slavery question, but the President had declared himself in favor of the untrameled admission of California into the Union, while, on the other hand, he did not approve the "higher law" doctrines which Mr. Seward was advocating as a nucleus for a new political party at the North.

Meanwhile, Henry Clay had reappeared at Washington as a Senator from Kentucky, and occupied his old quarters at the National Hotel, a large stockholder in which, Mr. Calvert, of Maryland, was one of Clay's many friends. Although in his seventy-third year, Mr. Clay was apparently hale and hearty, but showed his age. His head, bald on the top, was fringed with long, iron-gray hair, his cheeks were somewhat sunken, his nose had a pinched look, but his wide mouth was, as in years past, wreathed in genial smiles. He always was dressed in black, and from a high black satin stock, which enveloped his long neck, emerged a huge white shirt collar, which reached to his ears. He mingled in society, generally kissed the prettiest girls wherever he went, and enjoyed a quiet game of cards in his own room, with a glass of toddy made from Bourbon County whisky.

At the commencement of the session Mr. Clay requested that he might be excused from service on any of the standing committees of the Senate, and his wish was granted. It was not long, however, before he evinced a desire to re-enter the arena of debate as a leader of the Whig party, but not as a follower of President Taylor. Presenting a series of resolutions which would consolidate the settlement of the eight different questions involving slavery, then before Congress, into what he expected would prove a lasting compromise, he moved their reference to a select committee of thirteen, with instructions to report them in one bill. The Committee was authorized, but not without opposition, and Mr. Webster's vote secured for Mr. Clay the chairmanship. A general compromise bill was speedily prepared, and the "battle of the giants" was recommenced, Clay, Webster, and Cal-

houn engaging for the last time in a gladiatorial strife, which exhibited the off-hand, genial eloquence of the Kentuckian, the ponderous strength of the Massachusetts Senator, and the concentrated energies of South Carolina's favorite son. Mr. Clay was the leader in the debate, which extended over seven months, and during that time he was ever on the alert, sometimes delivering a long argument, sometimes eloquently replying to other Senators, and sometimes suggesting points to some one who was to speak on his side. Indignant at the treatment which he had received from the Whig party he stood unsubdued, and so far from retreating from those who had deserted him, he intended to make the Taylor Administration recall its pledges, break its promises, and become national, or pro-slavery, Whigs.

Mr. Webster was equally grieved and saddened by the faithlessness of Massachusetts men who had in years past professed friendship for him, but of whose machinations against him he had obtained proof during the preceding autumn. He also ascertained that, to use the words of Mr. Choate, "the attention of the public mind began to be drawn a little more directly to the great question of human freedom and human slavery." If he responded to the beatings of the New England heart, and resisted the aggressions and usurpations of the slave power, he would have to follow the lead of the Abolitionists, for whom he had always expressed a profound contempt. Dejected and depressed, Mr. Webster would at that time have been glad to take the mission to England, and thus terminate his career of public service; but he was defeated by the claims of Mr. Abbott Lawrence, who, having been recently disappointed in not receiving the appoint-

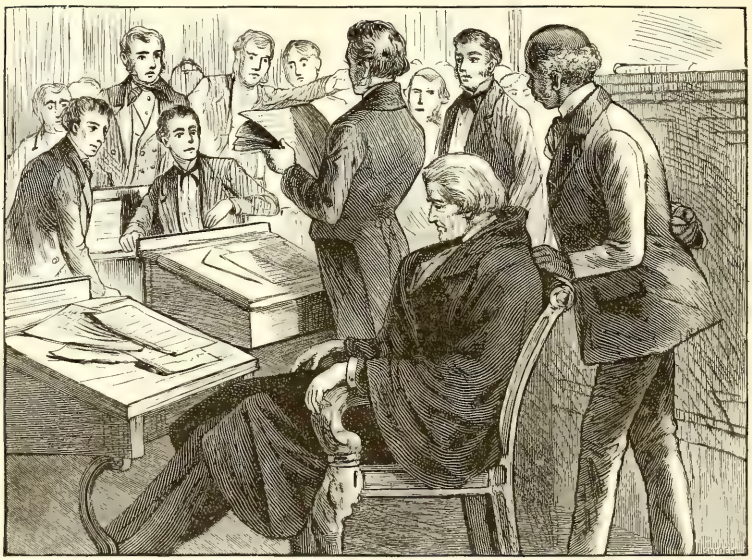
ment of Secretary of the Treasury, refused to be comforted unless he could be the successor of George Bancroft at the Court of St. James.

Thaddeus Stevens and Joshua R. Giddings asserted, after the decease of Mr. Webster, that he prepared a speech, the manuscript of which they had read, which was a powerful exposition and vindication of Northern sentiment upon the compromise measures, especially the fugitive-slave bill. If this was true, he was doubtless induced to "change front" by pledges of Southern support for the Presidency; but he is reported by Theodore Parker as having said to a fellow Senator, on the morning of the 7th of March, "I have my doubts that the speech I am going to make will ruin me." He should have remembered that he had himself said of the Emperor Napoleon, "His victories and his triumphs crumbled to atoms, and moldered to dry ashes in his grasp, because he violated the general sense of justice of mankind."

At this time Webster's far-seeing mind was doubtless troubled by the prospects of a bloody civil war, with the breaking up of the Union he loved so well. He stood by the old compromises rather than bring on a sectional conflict, and in his opinion there was no sacrifice too great to avert a fratricidal contest. "I speak to-day," said he, "for the preservation of the Union!" His words were in after years the key-notes of many appeals for the protection and the preservation of the United States.

Mr. Calhoun's health had gradually failed, and at last he was supported into the Senate Chamber wrapped in flannels, like the great Chatham, and requested that his friend, Senator Mason, might read some remarks which he had prepared. The request

was, of course, granted, and while Mr. Mason read the defiant pronunciamiento its author sat wrapped in his cloak, his eyes glowing with meteor-like brilliancy as he glanced at Senators upon whom he desired to have certain passages make an impression. When Mr. Mason had concluded, Mr. Calhoun was supported from the Senate and went back to his lodgings at Mr.

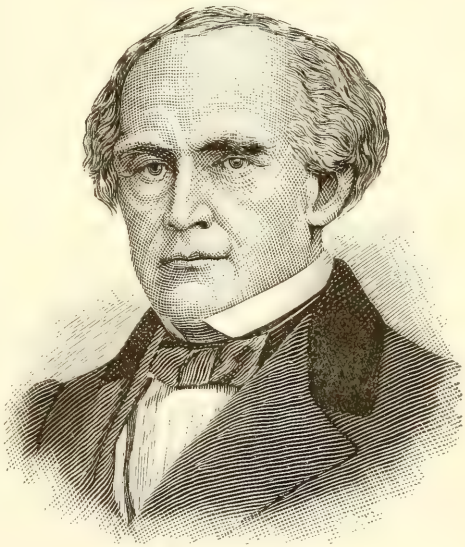


CALHOUN'S LAST APPEARANCE IN THE SENATE.

Hill's boarding-house, afterward known as the Old Capitol, to die.

Mr. Jefferson Davis aspired to the leadership of the South after the death of Mr. Calhoun, and talked openly of disunion. "Let the sections," said he, in the Senate Chamber, "part, like the patriarchs of old, and let peace and good-will subsist among their descendants. Let no wound be inflicted which time

cannot heal. Let the flag of our Union be folded up entire, the thirteen stripes recording the original size of our family, untorn by the unholy struggles of civil war, its constellation to remain undimmed, and speaking to those who come after us of the growth and prosperity of the family whilst it remained united. Unmutilated, let it lie among the archives of the Republic, until some future day, when wiser counsels shall prevail, when men shall have been sobered in the school of adversity, again to be unfurled over the continent-wide Republic."



SALMON P. CHASE.

Senator Hale, who, with Mr. Salmon P. Chase, was not named on any of the committees of the Senate, was a constant target for the attacks of the Southerners, but the keenest shafts of satire made no more impression upon him than musket-balls do upon the hide of a rhinoceros. One day when Senator Clemens had asserted that the Union was virtually dissolved, Mr. Hale said, "If this is not a matter too serious for pleasant illustration, let me give you one. Once in my life, in the capacity of Justice of the Peace—for I held that office before I was Senator—I was called on to officiate in uniting a couple in the bonds of matrimony. They came up, and I made short work of it. I asked

the man if he would take the woman whom he held by the hand to be his wedded wife; and he replied, 'To be sure I will. I came here to do that very thing.' I then put the question to the lady whether she would have the man for her husband. And when she answered in the affirmative, I told them they were man and wife then. She looked up with apparent astonishment and inquired, 'Is that all?' 'Yes,' said I, 'that is all.' 'Well,' said she, 'it is not such a mighty affair as I expected it to be, after all!' If this Union is already dissolved, it has produced less commotion in the act than I expected."

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ROBERT CHARLES WINTHROP was born at Boston, Massachusetts, May 12th, 1809; was a Representative in Congress from Massachusetts from December 5th, 1842, to July 30th, 1850, when, having been appointed a United States Senator from Massachusetts, he took his seat in the Senate, serving until February 7th, 1851; was Speaker of the House during the Thirtieth Congress, and a part of the Thirty-first Congress.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### PROMINENT STATESMEN AND DIPLOMATS.

SAM HOUSTON, OF TEXAS—SEWARD, OF NEW YORK—BUCHANAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA—AGRICULTURAL DONATIONS—DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES—SOCIAL ENJOYMENTS—WINTHROP'S FAREWELL SUPPER—FATAL ILLNESS OF GENERAL TAYLOR—DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT.

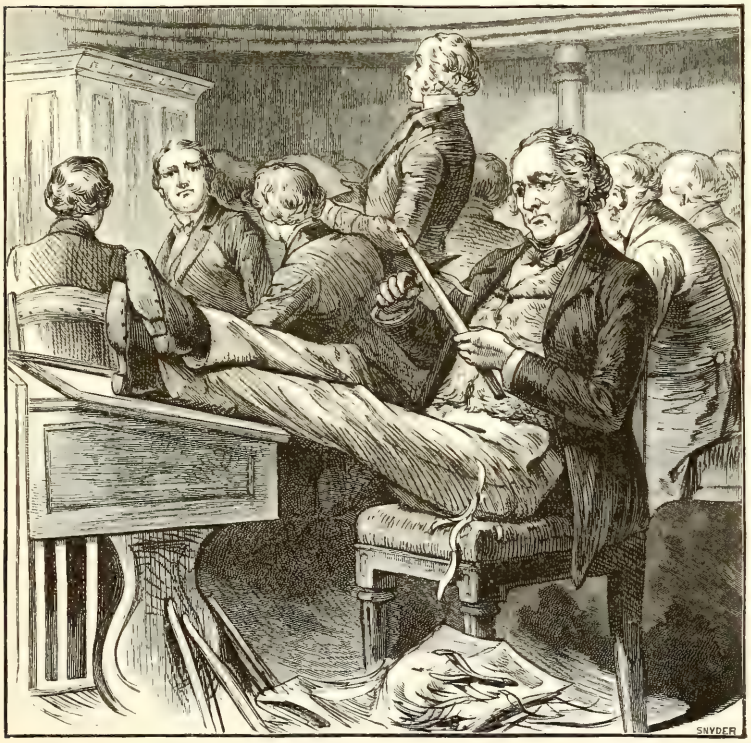
A PROMINENT figure at Washington during the Taylor Administration was General Sam Houston, a large, imposing-looking man, who generally wore a waistcoat made from the skin of a panther, dressed with the hair on, and who generally occupied himself during the sessions of the Senate in whittling small sticks of soft pine wood, which the Sergeant-at-Arms provided for him. His life had been one of romantic adventure. After having served with distinction under General Jackson in the Creek War, he had become a lawyer, and then Governor of the State of Tennessee. Soon after his inauguration he had married an accomplished young lady, to whom he one day intimated, in jest, that she apparently cared more for a former lover than she did for him. "You are correct," said she, earnestly. "I love Mr. Nickerson's little finger better than I do your whole body." Words ensued, and the next day Houston resigned his Governorship, went into the Cherokee country, west of the Arkansas River, adopted the Indian costume, and became an Indian trader. He was the best customer supplied from his own whisky barrel, until one day,

after a prolonged debauch, he heard from a Texan Indian that the Mexicans had taken up arms against their revolted province. A friend agreeing to accompany him, he cast off his Indian attire, again dressed like a white man, and never drank a drop of any intoxicating beverage afterward. Arriving in Texas at a critical moment, his gallantry was soon conspicuous, and in due time he was sent to Washington as United States Senator. His strong points, however, were more conspicuous on the field than in the Senate.

William H. Seward entered the Senate when General Taylor was inaugurated as President, and soon became the directing spirit of the Administration, although Colonel Bullit, who had been brought from Louisiana to edit the *Republic*, President Taylor's recognized organ, spoke of him only with supercilious contempt. Senator Foote sought reputation by insulting him in public, and was himself taunted by Mr. Calhoun with the inconsistent fact of intimacy with him in private. The newly elected Senator from New York persisted in maintaining amicable relations with his revilers, and quietly controlled the immense patronage of his State, none of which was shared by the friends of Vice-President Fillmore. He was not at heart a reformer; he probably cared but little whether the negro was a slave or a freeman ; but he sought his own political advancement by advocating in turn anti-Masonry and abolitionism, and by politically coquetting with Archbishop Hughes, of the Roman Catholic Church, and Henry Wilson, a leading Know-Nothing. Personally he was honest, but he was always surrounded by intriguers and tricksters, some of whose nests he would aid in feathering. The most unscrupulous lobbyists that have ever haunted the Capitol were well known as de-

voted adherents of William H. Seward, and he swayed them as a sovereign.

Mr. James Buchanan had not shed many tears over the defeat of his rival, General Cass, and when the Whigs came into power he retired from the Department of State to his rural home, called Wheatland,




SAM HOUSTON WHITTLING IN THE SENATE.

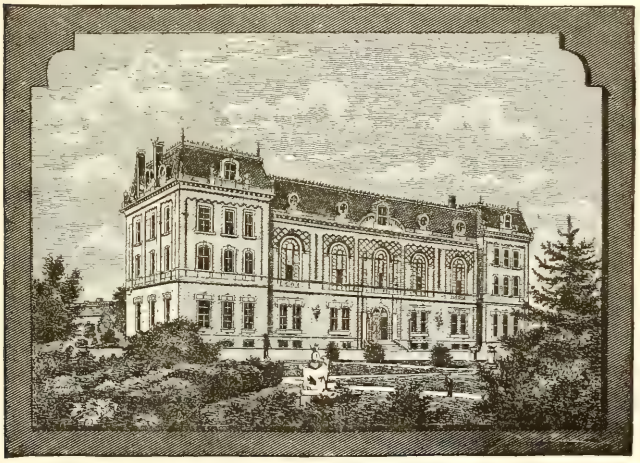
near Lancaster, Pa. He used to visit Washington frequently, and was always welcomed in society, where he made an imposing appearance, although he had the awkward habit of carrying his head slightly to one

side, like a poll-parrot. He always attempted to be facetious, especially when conversing with young ladies, but when any political question was discussed in his presence, he was either silent, or expressed himself with great circumspection. From his first entry into the House of Representatives, in 1821, he had entertained Presidential aspirations, and had sought to cultivate friendships that would be of service to him in obtaining the object of his ambition, protesting all the while that he was indifferent on the subject. After his retreat to Wheatland he began to secure strength for the coming National Democratic Convention of 1851, industriously corresponding with politicians in different sections of the country, and he was especially attentive to Mr. Henry A. Wise, with whose aid he hoped to secure the votes of the delegates from Virginia in the next National Democratic Convention.

Mr. Wise, recalling the time when he was a power behind the throne of John Tyler, encouraged Mr. Buchanan to bid for Southern support, and intimated a readiness to "coach" him so as to make him a favorite in the slave States. His counsels were kindly taken, and in return Mr. Buchanan wrote to the fiery "Lord of Accomac," in his most precise handwriting: "Acquire more character for prudence and moderation, and under the blessing of Heaven you may be almost anything in this country which you desire. There is no man living whose success in public and in private life would afford me more sincere pleasure than your own. You have every advantage. All you have to do is to go straight ahead, without unnecessarily treading upon other people's toes. I know you will think, if you don't say, 'What impudence it is for this childless old bachelor of sixty years of age to undertake to give me

advice! Why don't he mind his own business?' General Jackson once told me that he knew a man in Tennessee who had got rich by minding his own business; but still I urged him, and at last with success, which he never regretted."

The free distribution of plants and seeds to Congressmen for their favored constituents has made it an equally easy matter for the Commissioner of Agriculture to obtain liberal appropriations for his Depart-



THE AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

ment and the publication of enormous editions of his Reports. Indeed, the Bureau of Agriculture has grown under these fostering influences to one of immense magnitude, and its beautiful building, erected in Lincoln's time, is one of the ornaments of the city.

The first of the Agricultural Reports was issued by Edmund Burke, while he was commissioner of Patents during the Polk Administration. On the incoming of the Taylor Administration Mr. Burke was succeeded

by Thomas Ewbank, of New York City, and Congress made an appropriation of three thousand five hundred dollars for the collection of agricultural statistics. When Mr. Ewbank's report appeared the Southern Congressmen were (to quote the words used by Senator Jefferson Davis, in debate) amazed to find that it was preceded by what he termed "an introduction by Horace Greeley, a philosopher and philanthropist of the strong Abolition type." "The simple fact," he continued, "that Mr. Greeley was employed to write the introduction is sufficient to damn the work with me, and render it worthless in my estimation." This view was held by many other Southerners.

Notwithstanding this fierce denunciation, however, the public appreciated just such work as had been undertaken, and so rapid was the growth of interest in this direction that the Department of Agriculture was fully organized in 1862. It has continued to issue immense numbers of Reports, which are standing objects of jest and complaint, but the fact still remains that they contain splendid stores of valuable information.

Queen Victoria accredited as her Minister Plenipotentiary to President Taylor the Right Honorable Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer, an accomplished diplomat, slender, and apparently in ill health. He was afterward, for many years, the British Minister at Constantinople, where he defeated the machinations of Russia, and held in cunning hand the tangled thread of that delicate puzzle, the Eastern Question. His private secretary while he was at Washington was his nephew, Mr. Robert Bulwer (a son of the novelist), who has since won renown as Lord Lytton, Viceroy of India, and as the author—Owen Meredith.

The bitter political discussions at the Capitol during the first six months of 1850 prevented much social enjoyment. There were the customary receptions at the White House, and "hops" at the hotels, but few large parties were given. Tea-parties were numerous, at which a succession of colored waiters carried trays heaped with different varieties of home-made cakes




TEA-PARTY IN TAYLOR'S TIME.

and tarts, from which the beaux supplied the belles, and at the same time ministered to their own wants, balancing a well-loaded plate on one knee, while they held a cup and saucer, replete with fragrant decoctions from the Chinese plant "which cheers, but not inebriates."

The reigning belles were the queen-like widow Ashley, of Missouri, who afterward married Senator

Crittenden, and her beautiful daughter, who became the wife of Mr. Cabell, of Florida. Mrs. Fremont and her sisters made the home of their father, Colonel Benton, very attractive; General Cass's daughter, who afterward married the Dutch Minister, had returned from Paris with many rare works of art, and the proscribed Free-soilers met with a hearty welcome at the house of Dr. Bailey, editor of the *New Era*. It was there that Miss Dodge, better known as Gail Hamilton, passed her first winter at Washington. She was then at the entrance of her career of fame as a vigorous writer, who skillfully grasps a subject and dissects it, laying bare blatant demagoguery and political intrigues, yet clothing her original thoughts in undefiled English. In after years, when she wintered at Washington as the guest of her cousin, Mrs. James G. Blaine, she enjoyed the reputation of being the most brilliant conversationalist at the metropolis. Such a distinction, in such society as Washington can justly boast, is no small honor.

On the evening of the 4th of July, 1850, a large reception was given by ex-Speaker Winthrop to his gentleman friends, without distinction of party or locality. At the supper-table Mr. Winthrop had at his right hand Vice-President Fillmore, and at his left hand Mr. Speaker Cobb. Webster and Foote, Benton and Horace Mann, the members elect from California, with Clingman and Venable, who were trying to keep them out, were seen in genial companionship. Most of the Cabinet and the President's private secretary, Colonel Bliss, were there, side by side with those who proposed to impeach them. The only drawback to the general enjoyment of the occasion was the understanding that it was the farewell entertainment of Mr.

Winthrop, who had given so many evidences of his unselfish patriotism and eminent ability, and whose large experience in public affairs should have entitled him to the continued confidence of the people of Massachusetts. President Taylor was absent, and Colonel



"OLD ZACK" ON "OLD WHITEY."

Bliss apologized for his non-attendance, saying that he was somewhat indisposed.

The old hero had that day sat in the sun at the Washington Monument during a long spread-eagle address by Senator Foote, with a tedious supplementary harangue by George Washington Parke Custis.

While thus exposed to the midsummer heat for nearly three hours, he had drank freely of ice-water, and on his return to the White House he had found a basket of cherries, of which he partook heartily, drinking at the same time several goblets of iced milk. After dinner he still further feasted on cherries and iced milk, against the protestations of Dr. Witherspoon, who was his guest. When it was time to go to Mr. Winthrop's he felt ill, and soon afterward he was seized with a violent attack of cholera morbus. This was on Thursday, but he did not consider himself dangerously ill until Sunday, when he said to his physician, "In two days I shall be a dead man." Eminent physicians were called in, but they could not arrest the bilious fever which supervened. His mind was clear, and on Tuesday morning he said to one of the physicians at his bedside, "You have fought a good fight, but you cannot make a stand." Soon afterward he murmured, "I have endeavored to do my duty," and peacefully breathed his last. His sudden death was immediately announced by the tolling of the bell in the Department of State, and in a few moments the funereal knell was echoed from every church steeple in the district.

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WILLIAM H. SEWARD was born at Florida, New York, May 16th, 1801; was Governor of New York, 1838–1842; was United States Senator from New York from March 4th, 1849, until he entered the Cabinet of President Lincoln as Secretary of State, March 5th, 1861; remained Secretary of State under President Johnson until March 3d, 1869; traveled around the world in 1870–1871, and died at Auburn, New York, October 10th, 1872.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### FILLMORE AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

PRESIDENT FILLMORE—FUNERAL OF GENERAL TAYLOR—WEBSTER AGAIN SECRETARY OF STATE—THE COMPROMISE MEASURES—MRS. MILLARD FILLMORE—A PROUD FATHER—THE CAPITOL EXTENSION—THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS—WASHINGTON SOCIETY—PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

ON the tenth of July, 1850, the day after the death of General Taylor, Mr. Fillmore appeared in the Representatives' Hall at the Capitol, where both houses of Congress had met in joint session, took the oath of office, and immediately left. The new President was then fifty years of age, of average height, stalwart and rotund of form, with broad, heavy, florid features, white hair, shrewd, gray eyes, and dignified yet courteous manners. He had risen from the humble walks of life, by incessant toil, to the highest position in the Republic. Always animated by an indomitable spirit and by that industry and perseverance which are the sure guarantees of success, he was undoubtedly a man of ability, but his intellect seemed, like that of Lord Bacon, to lack the complement of heart. A blank in his nature, where loyalty to the public sentiment of the North should have been, made him a willing instrument to crush out the growing determination north of Mason and Dixon's line that freedom should be national, slavery sectional.

Mr. Fillmore had given satisfaction to the Senators

by the impartial manner in which he had presided as Vice-President over their deliberations. They had, by a unanimous vote, approved of his ruling, which reversed the decision of Mr. Calhoun, twenty-three years before, that the Vice-President had no right to call a



MILLARD FILLMORE.

Senator to order for words spoken in debate, and they had ordered his explanatory remarks to be entered upon the journal. By Mr. Seward and Mr. Weed, however, he was treated with marked contempt, and under their direction the Taylor Administration had

given him the cold shoulder. Even his requests that two of his personal friends should be appointed Collector of the Port and Postmaster at Buffalo had been formally refused, and the places had been given to partisans of Mr. Seward. The unexpected death of General Taylor was an element which even Mr. Seward had never taken into account, and the first consequence was undisguised confusion among the supporters of the Administration. The members of the Cabinet promptly tendered their resignations, and it was plainly visible that the sudden removal of the President had checkmated the plans so carefully made, and forced the chief player to feel the bitterness of political death. Mr. Fillmore was known to be amiable in private life, but it was evident that he would show little regard for those who had snubbed and slighted him in his less powerful position.

The remains of the deceased President lay in state for several days in the East Room at the White House, and were then interred with great pomp. Religious services were held at the White House, where the distinguished men of the nation were grouped around the coffin. At the funeral there was a large military escort of regulars and volunteers, commanded by General Scott, who was mounted on a spirited horse and wore a richly embroidered uniform, with a high chapeau crowned with yellow plumes. The ponderous funeral car was drawn by eight white horses. Behind the car was led "Old Whitey," the charger ridden by General Taylor in Mexico. He was a well-made horse, in good condition, and with head erect, as if inspired by the clang of martial music, he followed to the grave the remains of him whom he had so often borne to victory. When the artillery and infantry fired the parting

salute at the cemetery, the old war-horse pricked up his ears and looked around for his rider.

Mr. Fillmore tendered the Secretary of State's portfolio to Mr. Webster, who promptly accepted it. He had been assured that if he would advocate the compromises he would create a wave of popular sentiment that would float him into the White House in 1856, against all opposition, and that no Democratic aspirant would stand in his way. Believing all this, Mr. Webster had committed himself in his 7th of March speech, and had found that many of his life-long friends and constituents refused to follow his lead. Faneuil Hall had been closed to him, and he was glad to escape from the Senate Chamber into the Department of State. Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, John Quincy Adams, and Martin Van Buren had found that Department a convenient stepping-stone to the Presidential chair, and why should not he?

Mr. Webster was a great favorite in the Department of State, for he made no removals, and his generous and considerate treatment of the clerks won their affection. His especial favorite was Mr. George J. Abbott, a native of New Hampshire, who had been graduated at Exeter and Cambridge, and had then come to Washington to take charge of a boys' school. He was an accomplished classical scholar, and he used to hunt up Latin quotations applicable to the questions of the day, which Mr. Webster would commit to memory and use with effect. His private secretary was Mr. Charles Lanman, a young gentleman of literary and artistic tastes, who was a devoted disciple of Isaak Walton. Mr. Webster and he would often leave the Department of State for a day of piscatorial enjoyment at the Great Falls of the Potomac, when the Secretary

would throw off public cares and personal pecuniary troubles to cast his lines with boyish glee, and to exult loudly when he succeeded in hooking a fish. Another clerk in the Department who enjoyed Mr. Webster's esteem was Mr. Zantzinger, the son of a purser in the Navy, who possessed rare accomplish-



GREAT FALLS OF THE POTOMAC.

ments. Whenever Mr. Webster visited his estates in New Hampshire or in Massachusetts, he was accompanied by one of these gentlemen, who had the charge of his correspondence, and who, while enjoying his fullest confidence, contributed largely to his personal enjoyment.

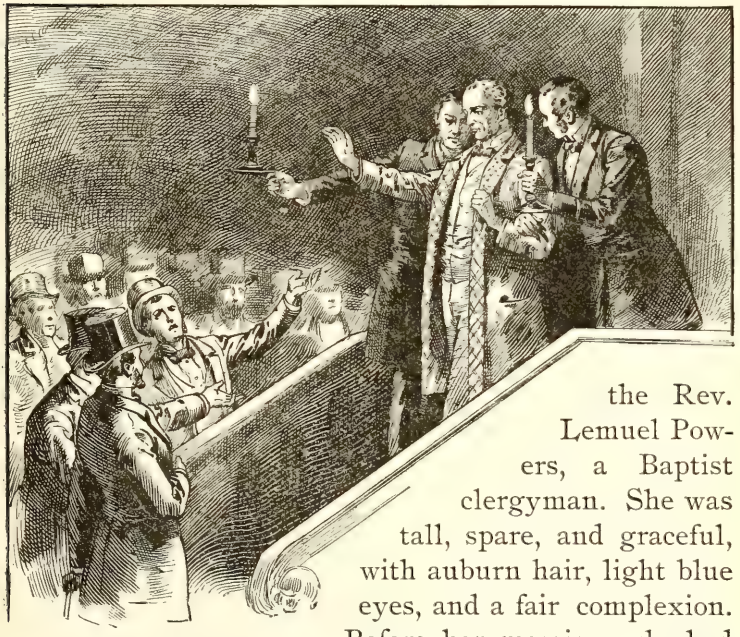
Mr. Webster's Washington home was a two-story brick house on Louisiana Avenue, next to the Unitarian Church. His dining-room was in the basement

story, and it was seldom that he had not friends at his hospitable table. Monica, the old colored woman, continued to be his favorite cook, and her soft-shell crabs, terrapin, fried oysters, and roasted canvas-back ducks have never been surpassed at Washington, while she could make a regal Cape Cod chowder, or roast a Rhode Island turkey, or prepare the old-fashioned New Hampshire "boiled dinner," which the "expounder of the Constitution" loved so well. Whenever he had to work at night, she used to make him a cup of tea in an old britannia metal teapot, which had been his mother's, and he used to call this beverage his "Ethiopian nectar." The teapot was purchased of Monica after Mr. Webster's death by Henry A. Willard, Esq., of Washington, who presented it to the Continental Museum at Indian Hill Farm, the author's residence.

Under the influence of the new Administration, Congress passed the several compromise measures in Mr. Clay's bill as separate acts. The debate on each one was marked by acrimony and strong sectional excitement, and each one was signed by President Fillmore amid energetic protests from the Northern Abolitionists and the Southern Secessionists. The most important one, which provided for the rendition of fugitive slaves, he referred to Attorney-General Crittenden before signing it, and received his opinion that it was constitutional. When it was placed on the statute book, the Union members of the House of Representatives organized a serenade to President Fillmore and his Secretary of State, Daniel Webster. The President bowed his acknowledgments from a window of the Executive Mansion, but Mr. Webster came out on the broad doorstep of his home, with a friend on either side of him holding a candle, and, attired in a dressing

gown, he commenced a brief speech by saying, "Now is the summer—no! Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer by this son of York." This ended the speech also.

The wife of President Fillmore was the daughter of



WEBSTER'S RESPONSE.

the Rev. Lemuel Powers, a Baptist clergyman. She was tall, spare, and graceful, with auburn hair, light blue eyes, and a fair complexion. Before her marriage she had taught school, and she was remarkably well-informed, but somewhat reserved in her intercourse with strangers. She did not come to Washington until after her husband became President, and her delicate health prevented her mingling in society, though she presided with queenly grace at the official dinner-parties.

The President's father, "Squire Fillmore," as he was called, visited his son at the White House. He

was a venerable-looking man, tall, and not much bowed by his eighty years, his full gray hair and intelligent face attracting much attention. When he was about to leave, a gentleman asked him why he would not remain a few days longer. "No, no!" said the old gentleman, "I will go. I don't like it here; it isn't a good place to live; it isn't a good place for Millard; I wish he was at home in Buffalo."

The corner-stone of one of the "extensions" of the Capitol was laid on the seventy-sixth anniversary of our national independence, July 4th, 1851, by the fraternity of Free Masons in "due and ample form." President Fillmore, the Cabinet, the Diplomatic Corps, several Governors of States, and other distinguished personages occupied seats on a temporary platform, which overlooked the place where the corner-stone was laid, Major B. B. French, Grand Master of Masons of the District of Columbia, officiating. Mr. Webster was the orator of the day, and delivered an eloquent, thoughtful, and patriotic address, although he was evidently somewhat feeble, and was forced to take sips of strong brandy and water to sustain him as he proceeded. Among the vast audience were three gentlemen who had, fifty-eight years previously, seen General Washington aid his brother Free Masons in laying the corner-stone of the original Capitol.

Later in that year, the large hall which contained the library of Congress, occupying the entire western side of the centre of the Capitol, was destroyed by fire, with almost all of its valuable contents. The weather was intensely cold, and, had not the firemen and citizens (including President Fillmore) worked hard, the entire Capitol would have been destroyed. Congress soon afterward made liberal appropriations, not only



SENATE EXTENSION OF THE CAPITOL AS COMPLETED.

for reconstructing the library of cast-iron, but for the purchase of books, so that the library soon rose, phœnix-like, from its ashes. But the purchases were made on the old plan, under the direction of the Congressional Joint Committee on the Library, the Chairman of which then, and for several previous and subsequent sessions, was Senator Pearce, of Maryland, a graduate of Princeton College. There was not in the Library of Congress a modern encyclopædia, or a file of a New York daily newspaper, or of any newspaper except the venerable daily, *National Intelligencer*, while *DeBow's Review* was the only American magazine taken, although the London *Court Journal* was regularly received, and bound at the close of each successive year.

Jenny Lind created a great sensation at Washington, and at her first concert Mr. Webster, who had been dining out, rose majestically at the end of her first song and made an imposing bow, which was the signal for enthusiastic applause. Lola Montez danced in her peculiar style to an audience equally large, but containing no ladies. Charlotte Cushman appeared as *Meg Merrilies*, Parodi and Dempster sang in concerts, Burton and Brougham convulsed their hearers with laughter, Booth gave evidence of the undiminished glow of his fiery genius by his masterly delineation of the "wayward and techy" *Gloster*, and Forrest ranted in *Metamora*, to the delight of his admirers. Colonel John W. Forney told a good story about a visit which he paid with Forrest to Henry Clay soon after the passage of the compromise measure. The Colonel unguardedly complimented a speech made by Senator Soulé, which made Mr. Clay's eyes flash, and he proceeded to criticise him very severely, ending by say-

ing: "He is nothing but an actor, sir—a mere actor!" Then, suddenly recollecting the presence of the tragedian, he dropped his tone, and turning toward Mr. Forrest, said, with a graceful gesture, "I mean, my dear sir, a mere French actor!" The visitors soon afterward took their leave, and as they descended the stairs, Forrest turned toward Forney and said, "Mr. Clay has proved by the skill with which he can change his manner, and the grace with which he can make an apology, that he is a better actor than Soulé."

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MILLARD FILLMORE was born at Summer Hill, New York, January 7th, 1800; was a Representative in Congress from New York, 1837–1843; was defeated as a Whig candidate for Governor of New York, 1844; was elected State Comptroller, 1847; was elected Vice-President on the Whig ticket headed by Z. Taylor in 1848, receiving one hundred and thirty-six electoral votes, against one hundred and twenty-seven electoral votes for W. O. Butler; served as President of the United States from July 9th, 1850, to March 3d, 1853; was defeated as the National American candidate for President in 1856; and died at Buffalo, New York, March 8th, 1874.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### ARRAIGNMENT OF DANIEL WEBSTER.

ACCUSATION AGAINST MR. WEBSTER—THE "EXPOUNDER OF THE CONSTITUTION" SORE AT HEART—BELLIGERENT MISSISSIPPIANS—PAINTING AND SCULPTURE AT THE CAPITOL—OVERLAND EXPLORATIONS—A WASHINGTON MOB—A WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT.

MR. CLAYTON, when Secretary of State, had received a proposition from August Belmont, as the agent of the Rothschilds, to pay the Mexican indemnity in drafts, for which four per cent. premium would be allowed. Then Mr. Webster became Secretary of State, and he entered into an agreement with an association of bankers, composed of the Barings, Corcoran & Riggs, and Howland & Aspinwall, for the negotiation of the drafts by them at a premium of three and a-half per cent. The difference to the Government was about forty thousand dollars, but the rival sets of bankers had large interests at stake, based on their respective purchases of Mexican obligations at depreciated values, and a war of pamphlets and newspaper articles ensued. The dispute was carried into Congress, and during a debate on it in the House, Representative Cartter, of Ohio, afterward Chief Justice of the Courts in the District of Columbia, was very emphatic in his condemnation of all the bankers interested. "I want the House to understand," said he, with a slight impediment in his speech, "that I take no part with the house of Rothschild, or

of Baring, or of Corcoran & Riggs. I look upon their scramble for money precisely as I would upon the contest of a set of blacklegs around a gaming-table over the last stake. They have all of them grown so large in gormandizing upon money that they have left the work of fleecing individuals, and taken to the enterprise of fleecing nations."

Mr. Charles Allen, of the Worcester district of Massachusetts, availed himself of the opportunity offered by this debate on the payment of the Mexican indemnity to make a long-threatened malignant attack on Daniel Webster. He asserted that he would not intrust Mr. Webster with the making of arrangements to pay the three millions of Mexican indemnity. He stated that it was notorious that when he was called to take the office of Secretary of State he entered into a negotiation by which twenty-five thousand dollars was raised for him in State Street, Boston, and twenty-five thousand dollars in Wall Street, New York. Mr. Allen trusted that the Democratic party had yet honor enough left to inquire into the matter, and that the Whigs even, would not palliate it, if satisfied of the fact.



GEORGE ASHMUN.

Mr. George Ashmun, Representative from the

Springfield district, retorted that Mr. Allen had eaten salt with Mr. Webster and received benefits from him, and that he was the only one who dared thus malignantly to assail him. Mr. Ashmun alluded to a letter from Washington, some time previously published in the Boston *Atlas*, stating that a member of the House had facts in his possession upon which to found a resolution charging a high officer with "corruption and treason," and he traced a connection between that letter and Mr. Allen's insinuations.

Mr. Henry W. Hilliard, of Alabama, followed Mr. Ashmun with a glowing eulogy of Mr. Webster, in which he declared that, although Massachusetts might repudiate him, the country would take him up, for he stood before the eyes of mankind in a far more glorious position than he could have occupied but for the stand which he had taken in resisting the legions which were bearing down against the rights of the South. This elicited a bitter rejoinder from Mr. Allen, who alluded to the fact that Mr. Hilliard was a clergyman, and said that he had found out how to serve two masters. Mr. Ashmun, asking Mr. Allen if he had not published confidential letters addressed to him by Mr. Charles Hudson, received as a reply, "No, sir! no, sir! You are a scoundrel if you say that I did!" The debate between Messrs. Ashmun and Allen finally became so bitter that Mr. Stephens, of Georgia, and other Representatives objected to its continuance, and refused to hear another word from either of them. The next day Mr. Lewis, of Philadelphia, improved an opportunity for eulogizing Mr. Webster, provoking a scathing reply from Mr. Joshua Giddings.

Immediately after this debate, Mr. Ashmun wrote to Mr. Hudson to inquire whether the statement was true

or false, and received the following telegraphic dispatch:

"BOSTON, March 3d, 1851.

"HON. GEORGE ASHMUN: I wrote a confidential letter to Hon. Charles Allen just before the Philadelphia Convention in 1848. He read the letter in a public meeting at Worcester, and published it in the Worcester *Spy*.

(Signed) "CHARLES HUDSON."

Mr. Ashmun declared on the floor of the House, by the authority of Mr. Webster, that the statement of Mr. Allen was "false in all its length and breadth, and in all its details," but there was doubtless a foundation for the statement. The friends of Mr. Webster admitted that a voluntary contribution had been tendered him as a compensation for the sacrifices he had made in abandoning his profession to accept the office of Secretary of State, and they justified his acceptance of the money on the ground that after having devoted the labors of a long life to his profession, and attained in it a high rank, which brought large fees, he should not be asked to relinquish those professional emoluments without, in justice to his obligations to his family, accepting an equivalent. Without indorsing this State-Street view of the case, it is to be regretted that the charges were made, to trouble Mr. Webster's spirit and sour his heart.

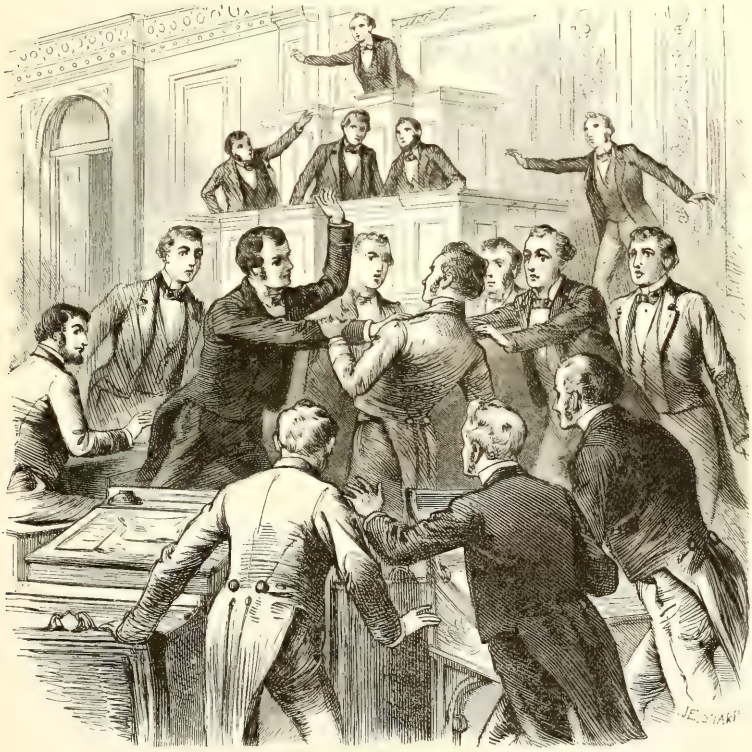
Mr. Webster often sought consolation in his troubles from the grand old poetry of the Hebrew Bible, which awakened peaceful echoes in his own poetic soul. His chosen "crony" in his latter years, though much younger than himself, was Charles Marsh, a New Hampshire man. Well educated, polished by travel, and free from pecuniary hamper, Marsh was a most delightful companion, and his wit, keen as Saladin's cimeter, never wounded. Fletcher Webster was also a

great favorite with his father, for he possessed what Charles Lever called "the lost art of conversation." Sometimes, when Mr. Webster's path had been crossed, and he was as black as night, Marsh and Fletcher would, by humorous repartees and witticisms, drive the clouds away, and gradually force him into a conversation, which would soon become enlivened by the "inextinguishable laughter of the gods."

That Mr. Webster felt keenly the attacks upon him was undeniable, and atonement could not afterward be made by eulogizing him. It has been well said, that if charity is to be the veil to cover a multitude of sins in the dead as well as in the living, cant should not lift that veil to swear that those sins were virtues. Mr. Webster was sorely troubled by the attitude taken by many Massachusetts men at a time when he needed their aid to secure the Presidency, which he undoubtedly believed would be tendered him by the Southern Whigs, seconded by many Southern Democrats. He lost flesh, the color faded from his cheeks, the lids of his dark eyes were livid, and he was evidently debilitated and infirm. At times he would be apparently unconscious of those around him, then he would rally, and would display his wonderful conversational qualities. Yet it was evident to those who knew him best that he was "stumbling down," as Carlyle said of Mirabeau, "like a mighty heathen and Titan to his rest."

One pleasant afternoon in March, Mr. Brown, of Mississippi, delivered a long speech in the House upon the politics of that State, in which he defended the State Rights party and ridiculed the Union movement as unnecessary, no one then being in favor of either disunion or secession. This, one of his colleagues, Mr. Wilcox,

denied. "Do you mean," said Mr. Brown, "to assert that what I have said is false?" "If you say," bravely responded Mr. Wilcox, "that there was no party in Mississippi at the recent election in favor of secession or disunion, you say what is false!" The last word was echoed by a ringing slap from Brown's open hand



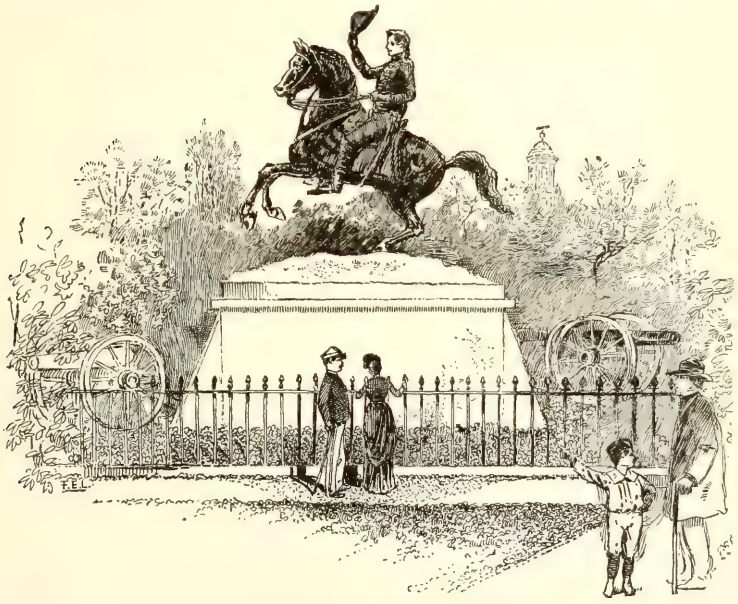
A ROW IN CONGRESS.

on the right cheek of Wilcox, who promptly returned the blow, and then the two men clinched each other in a fierce struggle. Many of the members, leaving their seats, crowded around the combatants, while Mr. Sey-

mour, of Connecticut, who temporarily occupied the chair, pounded with his mallet, shouting at the top of his voice, "Order! order!" The Sergeant-at-Arms was loudly called for, but he was absent, and before he could be found the parties had been separated. The Speaker resumed the chair, and in a few moments the contestants, still flushed, apologized to the House—not to each other. A duel was regarded as inevitable, but mutual friends intervened, and the next day it was formally announced in the House that the difficulty "had been adjusted in a manner highly creditable to both parties, who again occupied the same position of friendship which had existed between them previous to the upleasant affair of the day before." Thus easily blew over the terrific tempests of honorable members.

Mr. Leutze, a talented artist, petitioned Congress to commission him to paint for the Capitol copies of his works, "Washington Crossing the Delaware," and "Washington Rallying his Troops at Monmouth," but without success. Mr. Healy was equally unsuccessful with his proposition to paint two large historical paintings for the stairways of the extension of the Capitol, one representing the "Destruction of the Tea in Boston Harbor," and the other the "Battle of Bunker Hill;" but subsequently he received an order to paint the portraits of the Presidents which now grace the White House. Mr. Martin, a marine artist of recognized ability, also proposed in vain to paint two large pictures, one representing the famous action between the Constitution and the Guerriere, and the other the night combat between the Bon Homme Richard and the Serapis. Indeed, there have been scores of meritorious works of art offered to and declined by Committees of Congress, which have expended large sums in the pur-

chase of daubs disgraceful to the Capitol of the nation. The recognition refused these painters at Washington was freely accorded elsewhere, however. Leutze's "Columbus Before the Council at Salamanca" is justly deemed one of the gems of the Old World, and has given him an imperishable name. Among the really great works of our own country is Healy's painting, "Webster's Reply to Hayne," now in Faneuil Hall.



THE BRASS ROCKING-HORSE.

So with sculpture. Hiram Powers endeavored, without success, to obtain an order for his colossal statue of America, which was highly commended by competent judges, while Mr. Mills was liberally remunerated for his effigy of General Jackson balancing himself on a brass rocking-horse. Powers wrote: "I do not complain of anything, for I know how the world goes, as

the saying is, and I try to take it calmly and patiently, holding out my net, like a fisherman, to catch salmon, shad, or pilchards, as they may come. If salmon, why, then, we can eat salmon; if shad, why, then, the shad are good; but if pilchards, why, then, we can eat them, and bless God that we have a dinner at all."

The honors secured for Colonel Fremont by his father-in-law, Mr. Benton, for his path-findings across the Rocky Mountains, inspired other young officers of the army, and some civilians, with a desire to follow his example. Returning to Washington, each one had wonderful tales of adventure to relate. Even the old travelers, who saw the phœnix expire in her odoriferous nest, whence the chick soon flew forth regenerated, or who found dead lions slain by the quills of some "fretful porcupine," or who knew that the stare of the basilisk was death—even those who saw unicorns graze and who heard mermaids sing—were veracious when compared with the explorers of railroad routes across the continent. Senator Jefferson Davis did much to encourage them by having their reports published in quarto form, with expensive illustrations, and Cornelius Wendell laid the foundation of his fortune by printing them as "Pub. Docs."

The *National Era*, edited by Dr. Gamaliel Bailey, was a source of great annoyance to the pro-slavery men, and on one occasion they excited an attack on his house by a drunken mob. Dr. Bailey was a small, slender man, with a noble head, and a countenance on which the beautiful attributes of his character were written. Taking his life in his hands, he went to his door-way, attended by his wife, and bravely faced the infuriated crowd. He denied that he had any agency in a recent attempt to secure the escape of a party of

slaves to the North, and then called the attention of his hearers to the fact that at a public meeting of the citizens of Washington, not very long before that night, resolutions had been passed denouncing the French Government for having fettered the press, yet they were proposing to do in his case what their fellow-citizens had condemned when done by others. His remarks produced an effect, but the leaders of the mob raised the cry, "Burn the *Era* office!" and a movement was made toward that building, when Dan Radcliffe, a well-known Washington lawyer with Southern sympathies, sprang upon Dr. Bailey's doorstep and made an eloquent appeal in behalf of a free press, concluding with a proposition that the assemblage go to the house of the Mayor of Washington and give him three cheers. This was done, Radcliffe's good nature prevailing, and the mob dispersed peaceably.

Dr. Bailey was, however, no novice in dealing with mobs. Ten years before he came to Washington he resided in Cincinnati, where, in conjunction with James G. Birney, he published *The Philanthropist*, a red-hot anti-slavery sheet. During his first year in this enterprize his office was twice attacked by a mob, and in one of their raids the office was gutted and the press thrown into the river. These lively scenes induced a change of base and settled the good Doctor in the national metropolis.

The ablest newspaper correspondent at Washington during the Fillmore Administration was Mr. Erastus S. Brooks, one of the editors and proprietors of the New York *Express*. He was then in the prime of life, rather under the average height, with a large, well-balanced head, bright black eyes, and a swarthy complexion. What he did not know about what was going

on in political circles, before and behind the scenes, was not worth knowing. His industry was proverbial, and he was one of the first metropolitan correspondents to discard the didactic and pompous style which had been copied from the British essayists, and to write with a vigorous, graphic, and forcible pen. Washington correspondents in those days were neither eavesdroppers nor interviewers, but gentlemen, who had a recognized position in society, which they never abused.



ROBERT J. WALKER was born at Northumberland, Pennsylvania, July 19th, 1801; removed to Mississippi in 1826, and commenced the practice of law; was United States Senator from Mississippi, 1836–1845; was Secretary of the Treasury under President Polk, 1845–1849; was appointed, by President Buchanan, Governor of Kansas in 1857, but soon resigned, and died at Washington City, November 11th, 1869.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

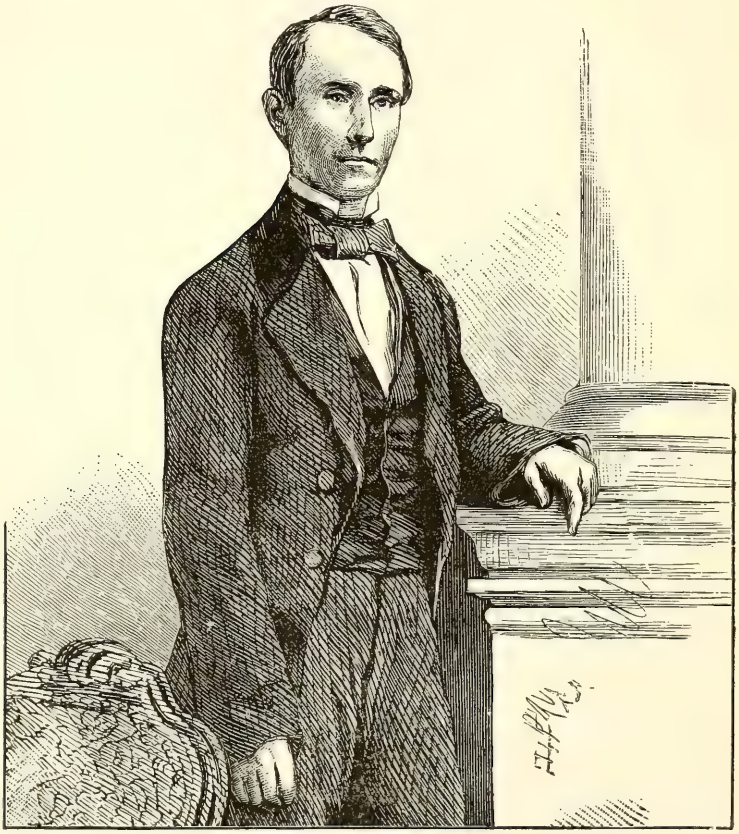
### FOREIGN INFLUENCE AND KNOW-NOTHINGISM.

"FILIBUSTERING"—THE HULSEMANN LETTER—KOSSUTH, OF HUNGARY—THE KNOW-NOTHINGS—BOSS TWEED, OF NEW YORK—BUTLER, OF SOUTH CAROLINA—OTHER PROMINENT SENATORS—EXIT CLAY—ENTER SUMNER—THE OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE.

THE forcible acquisition of territory was the means by which the pro-slavery leaders at the South hoped to increase their territory, and they defended this scheme in the halls of Congress, in their pulpits, and at their public gatherings. Going back into sacred and profane history, they would attempt to prove that Moses, Joshua, Saul, and David were "filibusters," and so were William the Conqueror, Charlemagne, Gustavus Adolphus, and Napoleon. Walker simply followed their example, except that they wore crowns on their heads, while he, a new man, only carried a sword in his hand. Was it right, they asked, when a brave American adventurer, invited by the despairing victims of tyranny in Cuba or of anarchy in Central America, threw himself boldly, with a handful of comrades, into their midst to sow the seeds of civilization and to reconstruct society—was it right for the citizens of the United States, themselves the degenerate sons of filibustering sires, to hurl at him as a reproach what was their ancestors' highest merit and glory?

General Walker, the "gray-eyed man of destiny,"

was the leading native filibuster, but foremost among the foreign adventurers—the Dugald Dalgettys of that epoch—who came here from unsuccessful revolutions abroad to seek employment for their swords,



THE FAMOUS FILIBUSTER, GEN. WALKER.

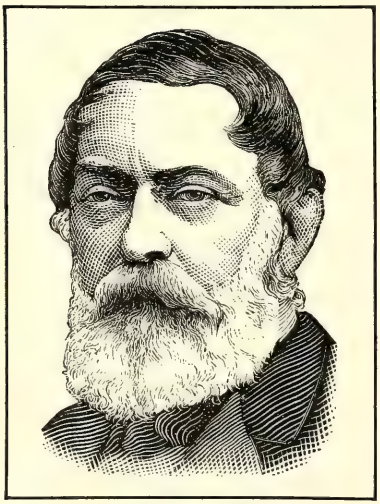
was General Heningen. He had served with Zumala-Carreguy, in Spain, with Schamyl, in the Caucasus, and with Kossuth, in Hungary, chronicling his exploits in works which won him the friendship of Wellington

and other notables. Going to Central America, he fought gallantly, but unsuccessfully, at Grenada, and he then came to Washington, where he was soon known as an envoy of "Cuba Libre." He married a niece of Senator Berrien, of Georgia, a devoted and cultivated woman, and his tall, soldier-like figure was to be seen striding along on the sunny sidewalk of Pennsylvania Avenue every pleasant morning, until in later years he went South to "live or die in Dixie."

President Taylor having sent Mr. Dudley Mann as a confidential agent to Hungary to obtain reliable information concerning the true condition of affairs there, the Austrian Government instructed its diplomatic representative at Washington, the Chevalier Hulsemann, to protest against this interference in its internal affairs, as offensive to the laws of propriety. This protest was communicated to Mr. Webster after he became Secretary of State, and in due time the Chevalier received an answer which completely extinguished him. It carefully reviewed the case, and in conclusion told the protesting Chevalier in plain Anglo-Saxon that nothing would "deter either the Government or the people of the United States from exercising, at their own discretion, the rights belonging to them as an independent nation, and of forming and expressing their own opinion freely and at all times upon the great political events which might transpire among the civilized nations of the earth." The paternity of this memorable letter was afterward ascribed to Edward Everett. It was not, however, written either by Mr. Webster or Mr. Everett, but by Mr. William Hunter, then the Chief Clerk of the Department of State.

Meanwhile, Kossuth had been released from his im-

prisonment within the dominion of the Sublime Porte, by request of the Government of the United States, and taken to England in the war steamer Mississippi. In due time the great Behemoth of the Magyar race arrived at Washington, where he created a marked sensation. The distinguished revolutionist wore a military uniform, and the steel scabbard of his sword trailed on the ground as he walked. He was about five feet eight inches in height, with a slight and apparently not strongly built frame, and was a little round-shouldered. His face was rather oval; a pair of bluish-gray eyes gave an animated and intelligent look to his countenance. His forehead, high and broad, was deeply wrinkled, and time had just begun to grizzle a head of dark, straight hair, a heavy moustache, and whiskers which formed a beard beneath his chin. Whether from his recent captivity or from constitutional causes, there was an air of lassitude in his look to which the fatigues of his voyage not improbably contributed. Altogether, he gave one the idea of a visionary or theoretical enthusiast rather than of a great leader or a soldier.



LOUIS KOSSUTH.

Kossuth was the guest of Congress at Brown's Hotel, but those Senators and Representatives who

called to pay their respects found members of his retinue on guard before the door of his apartments, armed with muskets and bayonets, while his anteroom was crowded with the members of his staff. They had evidently been reared in camps, as they caroused all day and then tumbled into their beds booted and spurred, furnishing items of liquors, wines, cigars, and damaged furniture for the long and large hotel bill which Congress had to pay. Mr. Seward entertained the Hungarian party at an evening reception, and a number of Congressmen gave Kossuth a subscription dinner at the National Hotel, at which several of the known aspirants for the Presidency spoke. Mr. Webster was, as became the Secretary of State, carefully guarded in his remarks, and later in the evening, when the champagne had flowed freely, he indulged in what appeared to be his impromptu individual opinions, but he unluckily dropped at his seat a slip of paper on which his gushing sentences had been carefully written out. General Houston managed to leave the table in time to avoid being called upon to speak, and General Scott, who regarded Kossuth as a gigantic humbug, had escaped to Richmond. Kossuth was invited to dine at the White House, and on New Year's day he held a reception, but he failed in his attempt to secure Congressional recognition or material aid.

A number of the leading public men at Washington were so disgusted by the assumption and arrogance displayed by Kossuth, and by the toadyism manifested by many of those who humbled themselves before him, that they organized a banquet, at which Senator Crittenden was the principal speaker. "Beware," said the eloquent Kentuckian, in the words of Washington,

"of the introduction or exercise of a foreign influence among you! We are Americans! The Father of our Country has taught us, and we have learned, to govern ourselves. If the rest of the world have not learned that lesson, how shall they teach us? We are the teachers, and yet they appear here with a new exposition of Washington's Farewell Address. For one, I do not want this new doctrine. I want to stand *super antiquas vias*—upon the old road that Washington traveled, and that every President from Washington to Fillmore has traveled."

The main effect of Kossuth's visit to the United States was an extraordinary impetus given to "The Order of United Americans," from which was evolved that political phenomenon, the American, or Know-Nothing, party. The mysterious movements of this organization attracted the curiosity of the people, and members of the old political organizations eagerly desired to learn what was carefully concealed. Secretly-held lodges, with their paraphernalia, pass-words, and degrees, grips and signs, tickled the popular fancy, and the new organization became formidable. Men of all religions and political creeds fraternized beneath the "stars and stripes," and solemnly pledged themselves to the support of "our country, our whole country, and nothing but our country."

The leaders of this Know-Nothing movement, who in the delirium of the hour were intrusted with dictatorial authority, were in no way calculated to exercise a permanent, healthful control. They were generally without education, without statesmanship, without knowledge of public affairs, and, to speak plainly, without the abilities or genius which might enable them to dispense with experience. Losing sight of the

cardinal principle of the American Order, that only those identified with the Republic by birth or permanent residence should manage its political affairs, these leaders fell back upon a bigoted hostility to the Church of Rome, to which many of their original members in Louisiana and elsewhere belonged. The result was that the mighty organization had begun to decay before it attained its growth, and that the old political leaders became members that they might elbow the improvised chieftains from power when the effervescence of the movement should subside. A number of Abolitionists, headed by Henry Wilson and Anson Burlingame, of Massachusetts, sought admission into the lodges, knelt at the altars, pledged themselves by solemn oaths to support the "Order," and then used it with great success for the destruction of the Whig party.

Another noted person who visited Washington early in the Administration of Mr. Fillmore was William M. Tweed, of New York, who came as foreman of the Americus Engine Company, Number Six, a volunteer fire organization. Visiting the White House, the company was ushered into the East Room, where President Fillmore soon appeared, and Tweed, stepping out in front of his command, said: "These are Big Six's boys, Mr. President!" He then walked along the line with Mr. Fillmore, and introduced each member individually. As they were leaving the room, a newspaper reporter asked Tweed why he had not made a longer speech. "There was no necessity," replied the future pillager of the city treasury of New York, "for the Company is as much grander than any other fire company in the world as Niagara Falls is grander than Croton dam." Two years afterward, Tweed, profiting

by a division in the Whig ranks in the Fifth District of New York, returned to Washington as a Representative in Congress. He was a regular attendant, never participating in the debates, and always voting with the Democrats. Twice he read speeches which were written for him, and he obtained for a relative the contract



TWEED INTRODUCING BIG SIX'S BOYS.

for supplying the House with chairs for summer use, which were worthless and soon disappeared.

Senator Andrew Pickens Butler was a prominent figure at the Capitol and in Washington society. He was a trifle larger round at the waistband than anywhere else, his long white hair stood out as if he were charged with electric fluid, and South Carolina was

legibly written on his rubicund countenance. The genial old patriarch would occasionally take too much wine in the "Hole in the Wall" or in some committee-room, and then go into the Senate and attempt to bully Chase or Hale; but every one liked him, nevertheless.

Then there was Senator Slidell, of Louisiana, a New Yorker by birth, with a florid face, long gray hair, and prominent eyes, forming a striking contrast in personal appearance with his dapper little colleague, Senator Benjamin, whose features disclosed his Jewish extraction. General Taylor had wished to have Mr. Benjamin in his Cabinet, but scandalous reports concerning Mrs. Benjamin had reached Washington, and the General was informed that she would not be received in society. Mr. Benjamin then rented a house at Washington, furnished it handsomely, and entertained with lavish hospitality. His gentlemen friends would eat his dinners, but they would not bring their wives or daughters to Mrs. Benjamin's evening parties, and she, deeply mortified, went to Paris.

On the first day of December, 1851, Henry Clay spoke in the Senate for the last time, and General Cass presented the credentials of Charles Sumner, who had been elected by one of the coalitions between the anti-slavery Know-Nothings and the Democrats, which gave the latter the local offices in New York, Ohio, and Massachusetts, and elected Seward, Chase, and Sumner to the United States Senate. Soon after Mr. Sumner took his seat in the arena which had been made famous by the political champions of the North, the South, and the West, Mr. Benton said to him, with a patronizing air, "You have come upon the stage too late, sir. Not only have our great men passed away, but the great issues have been settled also. The last

of these was the National Bank, and that has been overthrown forever. Nothing is left you, sir, but puny sectional questions and petty strifes about slavery and fugitive slave-laws, involving no national interests."

Mr. Sumner had but two coadjutors in opposing slavery and in advocating freedom when he entered the Senate, but before he died he was the recognized leader of more than two-thirds of that body. He was denounced by a leading Whig newspaper of Boston when he left that city to take his seat as "an agitator," and he was refused a place on any committee of the Senate, as being "outside of any healthy political organization," but he lived to exercise a controlling influence in Massachusetts politics and to be the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs. He had learned from Judge Story the value of systematic industry, and while preparing long speeches on the questions before the Senate he also applied himself sedulously to the practical duties of a Senator, taking especial pains to answer every letter addressed to him.

Mr. Speaker Linn Boyd used to preside with great dignity, sitting on an elevated platform beneath a canopy of scarlet curtains. Seated at his right hand, at the base of the platform beside the "mace," was Andrew Jackson Glossbrenner, the Sergeant-at-Arms, and on the opposite side was Mr. McKnew, the Doorkeeper. Mr. John W. Forney officiated at the Clerk's table, having been elected by a decided majority. His defeat two years previous had been very annoying to his Democratic friends at the North, who were expected to aid the Southern wing of the party with their votes, and yet were often deserted when they desired offices. "It is," said one of them, "paying us a great compliment for our principles, or great contempt for our

pliancy." Mr. Buchanan wrote to a Virginia Democratic leader, "Poor Forney deserves a better fate than to be wounded 'in the house of his friends,' and to vote for a Whig in preference to him was the unkindest cut of all. It will, I am confident, produce no change in his editorial course, but I dread its effect." Mr. Forney did not permit his desertion to influence his pen, and his loyalty to his party was rewarded by his election, two years after this defeat, as Clerk of the House.

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JEFFERSON DAVIS was born in Christian County, Kentucky, June 3d, 1808; graduated at West Point in 1828; was an officer in the United States Army, 1828–1835; was a Representative from Mississippi, December 1st, 1845, to June, 1846, when he resigned to command the First Regiment of Mississippi Riflemen in the war with Mexico; was United States Senator, December 6th, 1847, to November, 1851; was defeated as the Secession candidate for Governor of Mississippi in 1851 by H. S. Foote, Union candidate; was Secretary of War under President Pierce, March 7th, 1853, to March 3d, 1857; was again United States Senator, March 4th, 1857, until he withdrew, January 21st, 1861; was President of the Confederate States; was captured by the United States troops, May 10th, 1865, imprisoned two years at Fortress Monroe, and then released on bail.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### PLOTTING FOR THE PRESIDENCY.

PRESIDENT-MAKING—POLITICAL INTRIGUES—THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION—NOMINATION OF GENERAL PIERCE—THE WHIG CANDIDATES—RIVALRY BETWEEN WEBSTER AND FILLMORE—THE LAST WHIG NATIONAL CONVENTION—DEATH OF HENRY CLAY—GENERAL SCOTT AS A CANDIDATE—GENERAL FRANK PIERCE, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE—DEATH OF DANIEL WEBSTER—GENERAL PIERCE ELECTED PRESIDENT.

THE first session of the Thirty-second Congress, which began on the 1st of August, 1852, was characterized by sectional strife, and was devoted to President-making. President Fillmore, who had traveled in the Northern States during the preceding summer, felt confident that he would receive the Whig nomination, and so did Mr. Webster, who "weighed him down"—so Charles Francis Adams wrote Henry Wilson—"as the Old Man of the Sea did Sinbad." Meanwhile Mr. Seward and his henchman, Mr. Weed, were very active, and the latter afterward acknowledged that he had himself intrigued with the Democratic leaders for the nomination of Governor Marcy, who would be sure to carry the State of New York, and thus secure the defeat of the Whig candidate. "Holding President Fillmore and his Secretary of State, Mr. Webster, responsible for a temporary overthrow of the Whig party," says Mr. Weed, "I desired to see those gentlemen left to reap what they had sown. In other words, I wanted either Mr. Fill-

more or Mr. Webster to be nominated for President upon their own issues. I devoted several weeks to the removal of obstacles in the way of Governor Marcy's nomination for President by the Democratic National Convention."

General Cass, Mr. Douglas, and Mr. Buchanan were equally active in the Democratic ranks, and their respective friends became so angry with each other that it was an easy matter to win the nomination with what the politicians call "a dark horse."



LEWIS CASS.

The sessions of the National Democratic Convention were protracted and stormy, and on the thirty-fifth ballot the name of General Franklin Pierce was brought forward, for the first time, by the Virginia delegation. Several other States voted for the New Hampshire Brigadier, but it did not seem possible that he could be nominated, and the next day, on the forty-eighth ballot, Virginia gave her vote for Daniel S. Dickinson, of New York. It was received with great applause, but Mr. Dickinson, who was a delegate pledged to the support of Cass, was too honorable a man to accept what he thought belonged to his friend. Receiving permission to address the Convention, he eloquently withdrew his own name and pleaded so earnestly

for the nomination of General Cass, that he awakened the enthusiasm of the audience, and received a shower of bouquets from the ladies in the galleries, to which he gracefully alluded "as a rose-bud in the wreath of his political destiny."

The Convention at last, on the forty-ninth ballot, nominated General Pierce (Purse, his friends called him), a gentleman of courteous temper, highly agreeable manners, and convivial nature. He had served in the recent war with Mexico; he had never given a vote or written a sentence that the straightest Southern Democrat could wish to blot; and he was identified with the slave-power, having denounced its enemies as the enemies of the Constitution. William R. King, at the time president *pro tempore* of the Senate, was nominated for Vice-President, receiving every vote except the eleven given by the delegation from Illinois, which were for Jefferson Davis. Cass and Douglas were at first much provoked by the action of the Convention, but Buchanan gracefully accepted the situation.

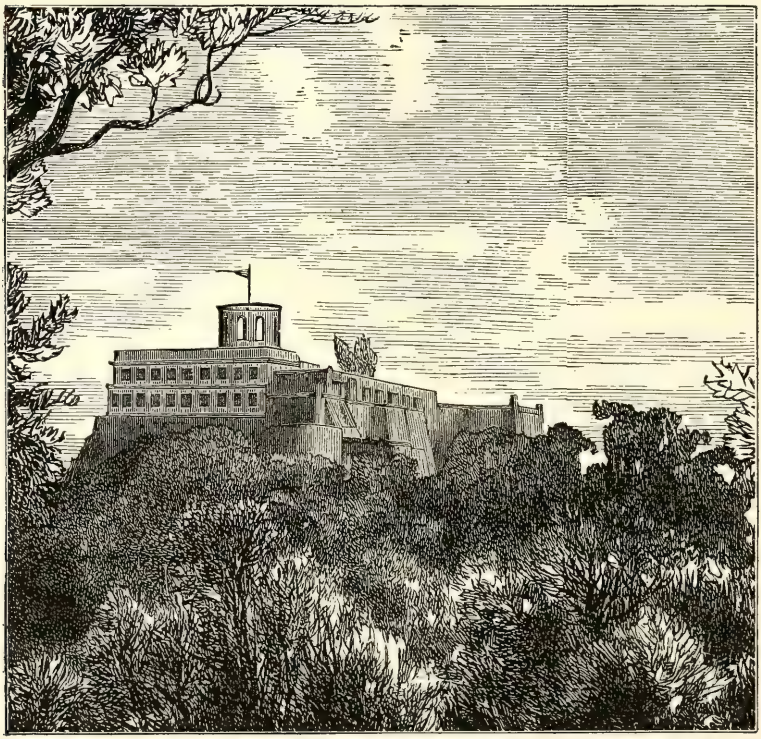
Daniel Webster felt and asserted that he was entitled to receive the Whig nomination. More than thirty years of public service had made him the ablest and the most conspicuous member of his party then on the stage, and neither Fillmore nor Scott could compare with him in the amount and value of public services rendered. He had worked long, assiduously, and faithfully to deserve the honors of his party and to qualify himself for the highest distinction that party could bestow upon him. He must receive its nomination now or never, as he was then upward of sixty years of age, and his vigorous constitution had shown signs of decay. He engaged in the campaign, however, with the hope and

the vigor of youth, writing letters to his friends, circulating large pamphlet editions of his life and of his speeches, and entertaining at his table those through whose influence he hoped to receive the Southern support necessary to secure his success. No statesman ever understood the value of printer's ink better than did Mr. Webster, and he always took care to have a record of what he did and said placed before the country. Unfortunately for his printers, much of his last campaign work was done on credit, and never was paid for.

President Fillmore, meanwhile, was quietly but steadily using the patronage of the Federal Government to secure the election of delegates to the Whig National Convention friendly to his own nomination. Mr. Webster counted on the support of the President's friends, but he never received from Mr. Fillmore any pledges that it would be given. On the contrary, the leading office-holders asserted, weeks prior to the assembling of the Convention, that the contest had already been narrowed down to a question between Fillmore and Scott. Mr. Seward's friends were of the same opinion, and urged the support of Scott as the only way to defeat the nomination of Fillmore. Horace Greeley wrote from Washington to Thurlow Weed: "If Fillmore and Webster will only use each other up, we may possibly recover—but our chance is slim. There is a powerful interest working hard against Douglas; Buchanan will have to fight hard for his own State; if he gets it he may be nominated; Cass is nowhere."

The Whig National Convention, the last one held by that party, met in Baltimore on Wednesday, the 16th of June, 1852. Two days were spent in effecting

an organization and in preparing a "platform," after which, on proceeding to ballot for a Presidential candidate, General Scott had one hundred and thirty-four votes, Mr. Fillmore one hundred and thirty-three, and Mr. Webster twenty-nine, every one of which was cast



CHAPULTEPEC, STORMED BY GENERAL SCOTT.

by a Northern delegate. Not a Southern vote was given to him, despite all the promises made, but Mr. Fillmore received the entire Southern strength. The balloting was continued until Saturday afternoon without any change, and even the eloquence of Rufus Choate failed to secure the vote of a single Southern

SCOTT'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO MEXICO.

delegate for his cherished friend. After the adjournment of the Convention from Saturday until Monday, Mr. Choate visited Washington, hoping to move Mr. Fillmore; but the President "made no sign," and Mr. Webster saw that the Presidency, to which he had so long aspired, was to pass beyond his reach. He was saddened by the disappointment, and especially wounded when he was informed that Mr. Clay had advised the Southern delegates to support Mr. Fillmore.

A nomination was finally made on the fifty-third ballot, when twenty-eight delegates from Pennsylvania changed their votes from Fillmore to General Scott. That evening a party of enthusiastic Whigs at Washington, after serenading President Fillmore, marched to the residence of Mr. Webster. The band performed several patriotic airs, but some time elapsed before Mr. Webster appeared, wearing a long dressing-gown, and looking sad and weary. He said but a few words, making no allusion to General Scott, and when, in conclusion, he said that, for one, he should sleep well and rise with the lark the next morning, and bade them good-night, the serenaders retired as if they had had a funeral sermon preached to them. Thenceforth Mr. Webster was a disappointed, heart-stricken man, and he retired to Marshfield profoundly disgusted with the insincerity of politicians.

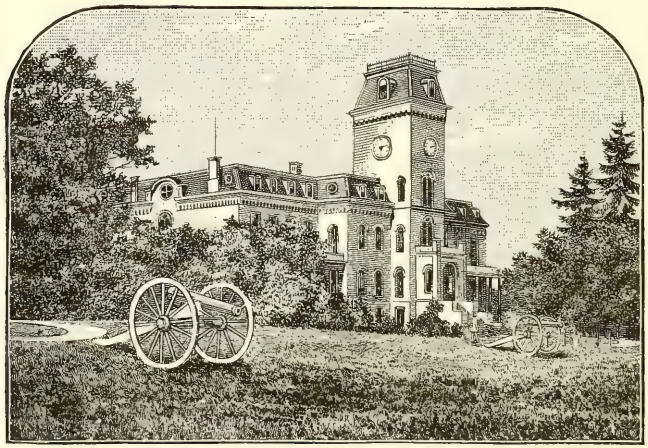
The noisy rejoicings by the Whigs at Washington over the nomination of General Scott disturbed Henry Clay, who lay on his death-bed at the National Hotel, attended only by one of his sons, Thomas Hart Clay, and a negro servant. The "Great Commoner" was very feeble, and a few days later he breathed his last, as a Christian philosopher should die. His hope con-

tinued to the end, though true and real, to be tremulous with humility rather than rapturous with assurance. On the evening previous to his departure, sitting an hour in silence by his side, the Rev. Dr. Butler heard him, in the slight wanderings of his mind to other days and other scenes, murmuring the words, "My mother! mother! mother!" and saying "My dear wife," as if she were present.

"Broken with the storms of life," Henry Clay gave up the ghost, and his remains were escorted with high funeral honors to his own beloved Commonwealth of Kentucky, where they rest beneath an imposing monument. Twice a candidate for the Presidency, and twice defeated, his death was mourned by an immense number of attached personal friends, and generally regretted by the people of the United States.

The Whigs were greatly embarrassed by General Scott, who persisted in making campaign speeches, some of which did him great harm. Their mass meetings proved failures, notably one on the battle-ground of Niagara, but they endeavored to atone for these discouraging events by a profuse distribution of popular literature. They circulated large editions of a tract by Horace Greeley, entitled, "Why am I a Whig?" and of campaign lives of "Old Chapultepec," published in English, French, and German. Mr. Buchanan was unusually active in his opposition to the Whig ticket. "I should regard Scott's election," he wrote to a friend, "as one of the greatest calamities which could befall the country. I know him well, and do not doubt either his patriotism or his integrity; but he is vain beyond any man I have ever known, and, what is remarkable in a vain man, he is obstinate and self-willed and unyielding. His judgment, except in

conducting a campaign in the field, is perverse and unsound; and when, added to all this, we consider that, if elected at all, it will be under the auspices of Seward and his Abolition associates, I fear for the fate of this Union." General Scott was mercilessly abused by the Democratic orators and writers also, who even ridiculed the establishment of the Soldiers' Home at Washington, with the contribution levied on the City



THE SOLDIERS' HOME

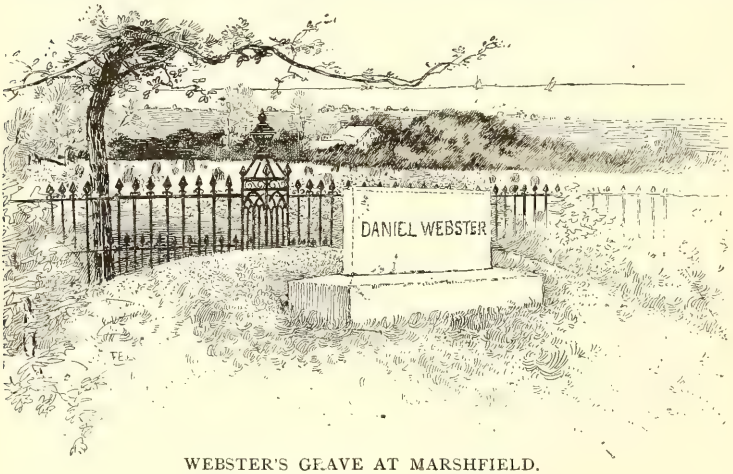
of Mexico when captured by him, as the creation of an aristocratic body of military paupers.

The Democratic party, forgetting all previous differences, rallied to the support of their candidate. A campaign life of him was written by his old college friend, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and eloquent speakers extolled his statesmanship, his military services, and his devotion to the compromise measures which were to avert the threatened civil war. A good estimate of his character was told by the Whig speakers, as having been given to an itinerant lecturer by the landlord of a New

Hampshire village inn. "What sort of a man is General Pierce?" asked the traveler. "Waal, up here, where everybody knows Frank Pierce," was the reply, "and where Frank Pierce knows everybody, he's a pretty considerable fellow, I tell you. But come to spread him out over this whole country, I'm afraid that he'll be dreadful thin in some places."

The death of Mr. Webster aided the Democratic candidate. The broken-down and disappointed statesman died at his loved rural home on the sea-shore, where, by his request, his cattle were driven beneath his window so that he could gaze on them once more before he left them forever. He wrestled with the grim Destroyer, showing a reluctance to abandon life, and looking into the future with apprehension rather than with hope. When Dr. Jeffries repeated to him the soothing words of Sacred Writ, "Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me," the dying statesman exclaimed, "Yes; that is what I want, Thy rod; Thy staff!" He was no hypocrite, and although he prayed often and earnestly, he did not pretend that he felt that peace "which passeth all understanding," but he did exhibit a devoted submission and a true reliance on Almighty God. Craving stimulants, he had heard Dr. Jeffries tell an attendant, "Give him a spoonful of brandy in fifteen minutes, another in half an hour, and another in three quarters of an hour, if he still lives." These directions were followed with exactness until the arrival of the time last mentioned, when the attendants were undecided about administering another dose. It was in the midst of their doubts that the dying statesman, who had been watching a clock in the room, partly raised his head and feebly remarked: "I still live." The brandy was given to him, and he sank into a state of tranquil unconsciousness, from which he never rallied.

Those who attended the funeral at Marshfield saw Mr. Webster's remains lying in an open iron coffin, beneath the shade of a large elm tree before the house. The body was dressed in a blue coat with gilt buttons, white vest, cravat, pantaloons, gloves, and shoes with dark cloth gaiters. His hand rested upon his breast, and his features wore a sad smile familiar to those who had known him in his later years. The village pastor conducted the services, after which the upper half of the coffin was put on, and on a low platform car, drawn




WEBSTER'S GRAVE AT MARSHFIELD.

by two black horses, it was taken to the burial-ground on the estate. On either side of the remains walked the pall-bearers selected by the deceased—six sturdy, weather-bronzed farmer-fishermen, who lived in the vicinity—while General Pierce, the Mayor of Boston, Edward Everett, Rufus Choate, and other distinguished personages followed as they best could. There were many evidences of grief among the thousands of Mr. Webster's friends present, and yet death was for him a happy escape from trouble. He was painfully aware

that he had forfeited the political confidence of the people of Massachusetts and gained nothing by so doing; he had found that he could not receive a nomination for the Presidency, even from the party which he had so long served, and his pecuniary embarrassments were very annoying. Neither could he, under the circumstances, have continued to hold office under Mr. Fillmore, who, after Webster's funeral, appointed Edward Everett as his successor in the Department of State.

When the nineteenth Presidential election was held, General Scott received only the electoral votes of Massachusetts, Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee; Pierce and King received two hundred and fifty-four votes against forty-two votes for Scott and Graham.



JOHN JORDAN CRITTENDEN was born in Woodford County, Kentucky, September 10th, 1786; was United States Senator from Kentucky, December 1st, 1817, to March 3d, 1819, and again December 7th, 1835, to March 3d, 1841; was Attorney-General under President Harrison, March 5th, 1841, to September 13th, 1841; was again United States Senator, March 31st, 1842–1848; was Governor of Kentucky, 1848–1850; was Attorney-General under President Fillmore, July 20th, 1850, to March 3d, 1853; was again United States Senator, December 3d, 1855, to March 3d, 1861; was a Representative in Congress, July 4th, 1861, to March 3d, 1863, and died at Frankfort, Kentucky, July 26th, 1863.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### PIERCE AT THE HELM.

INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT PIERCE—VICE-PRESIDENT KING—THE CABINET—POPULARITY OF THE NEW PRESIDENT—PRYOR, OF VIRGINIA—RARE OLD WINES—PEALE'S PORTRAITS OF WASHINGTON—BRADY' PORTRAITS—VISIT OF THACKERAY—A COPYRIGHT VICTIM—JULLIEN'S CONCERTS.

GENERAL PIERCE received a severe blow after his election, a railroad accident in Massachusetts depriving him of his only child, a promising boy, to whom he was devotedly attached. A week before the inauguration he escorted his sorrow-stricken wife to Baltimore, where he left her, and then went to Washington, accompanied by his private secretary, Mr. Sidney Webster. President Fillmore invited them to dine socially at the White House, and in the evening they were present at a numerously attended public reception in the East Room.

The inauguration of General Pierce attracted crowds from the cities on the Atlantic coast, with some from the western slope of the Alleghanies. It was a cold, raw day, and the President-elect rode in a carriage with President Fillmore, surrounded by a body-guard of young gentlemen, mounted on fine horses, and serving for that day as Deputy United States Marshals. There was a military escort, composed of the Marine Corps, the uniformed militia of the District, and visiting companies from Baltimore and Alexandria. Behind the

President's carriage marched several political associations and the mechanics at the Navy Yard, with a full-rigged miniature vessel.

As William R. King, the Vice-President-elect, was in Cuba, hoping to benefit his health, the Senate elected

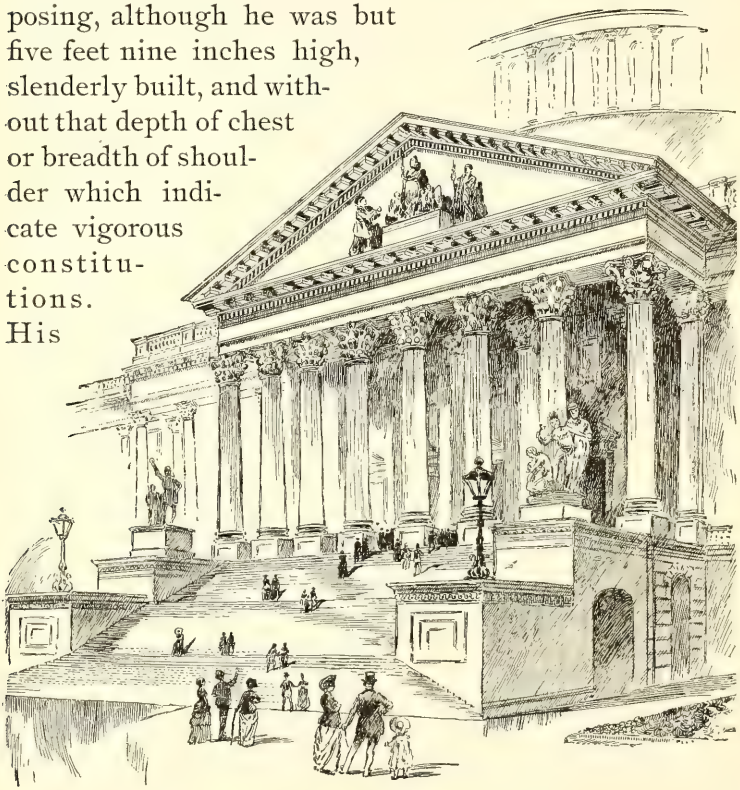


FRANKLIN PIERCE.

David J. Atchison, of Missouri, President *pro tempore*. The Senate, accompanied by the Diplomatic Corps and officers of the army and of the navy, all in full uniform, then moved in procession to the east front of the Capitol. When the cheers with which the President-elect was received had subsided, he advanced to the

front of the platform and delivered his inaugural address, which he had committed to memory, although he held the manuscript in his hands.

The personal appearance of General Pierce was dignified and winning, if not imposing, although he was but five feet nine inches high, slenderly built, and without that depth of chest or breadth of shoulder which indicate vigorous constitutions. His



EASTERN PORTICO OF THE CAPITOL.

complexion was pale and his features were thin and careworn, but his deportment was graceful and authoritative. It was evident that he belonged to that active, wiry class of men capable of great endurance and physical fatigue.

The inaugural was a plain, straightforward document,

intensely national in tone, and it stirred the hearts of the vast audience which heard it like the clarion notes of a trumpet. The new President had an abiding confidence in the stability of our institutions. Snow began to fall before he had concluded his address and taken the oath of office, which was administered by Chief Justice Taney.

William Rufus King took the oath of office as Vice-President on the 4th of March, 1853, at a plantation on the highest of the hills that surround Matanzas, with the luxuriant vegetation of Cuba all around, the clear, blue sky of the tropics overhead, and a delicious sea breeze cooling the pure atmosphere. The oath was administered by United States Consul Rodney, and at the conclusion of the ceremonies the assembled creoles shouted, "*Vaya vol con Dios!*" (God will be with you), while the veteran politician appeared calm, as one who had fought the good fight and would soon lay hold of eternal life. Reaching his home at Cahaba, Ala., on the 17th of April, he died the following day, and his remains were buried on his plantation, known as the "Pine Hills."

President Pierce formed a Cabinet of remarkable ability. He had wanted Caleb Cushing as his Secretary of State, but the old anti-slavery utterances of the Massachusetts Brigadier had not been forgotten, and Pierce could make him only his Attorney-General. Governor Marcy was placed at the head of the Department of State, and he invited Mr. George Sumner, a brother of the Senator, to become Assistant Secretary of State, but the invitation was declined. James Guthrie, a stalwart, clear-headed Kentuckian, was made Secretary of the Treasury, with Peter G. Washington, a veteran District politician, as Assistant Secretary.

Jefferson Davis solicited and received the position of Secretary of War, James C. Dobbin, of North Carolina, was made Secretary of the Navy; Robert McClelland, of Michigan, was designated by General Cass for Secretary of the Interior, and James Campbell, of Pennsylvania, was appointed Postmaster-General, with thirty thousand subordinate places to be filled, its progressive improvements to be looked after, and a general desire on the part of the public for a reduction of postage. An abler Cabinet never gathered around the council-table at the White House.

Jefferson Davis, the Secretary of War, entertained more than any of his associates. His dinner-parties, at which six guests sat down with the host and hostess, were very enjoyable, and his evening receptions, which were attended by the leading Southerners and their Northern allies, were brilliant affairs with one exception. On that occasion, owing, it was said, to a defect in the gas meter, every light in the house suddenly ceased to burn. It was late, and with great difficulty lamps and candles were obtained to enable the guests to secure their wraps and make their departure.

No other President ever won the affections of the people of Washington so completely as did General Pierce. Such was the respect entertained for him by citizens of all political creeds, that when he took his customary "constitutional" walk down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol and back one could mark his progress by the uplifting of hats as he passed along. He and Mrs. Pierce, disregarding the etiquette of the White House, used to pay social visits to the families of New Hampshire friends holding clerkships, and to have them as guests at their family dinner-

table. The President's fascinating courtesy and kindness were irresistible.

Roger A. Pryor first figured at Washington in the spring of 1853. He was an editorial contributor to the Washington *Union*, the Democratic organ, and he wrote a scathing review of *The War of Ormuzd and Ahriman*, by Henry Winter Davis, of Baltimore, which set forth the United States and Russia as the respective champions of the principles of liberty and of despotism, and claimed to foresee in the distant future a mighty and decisive conflict between these persistent combatants. This Mr. Pryor pronounced impossible, asserting that "in every element of national strength and happiness Russia is great and prosperous beyond any other country in Europe," and that the United States and Russia, instead of becoming enemies, "will consolidate and perpetuate their friendly relations by the same just and pacific policy which has regulated their intercourse in times past." This article was very distasteful to the Democratic readers of the *Union*, and the editor denounced it. Mr. Pryor came back at him in the *Intelligencer*, declaring that he was not the eulogist of the Russian Empire, but setting forth at great length the good-will of Russia toward the United States, and especially announcing that "in Russia the maudlin, mock philanthropy of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is an unknown disease." It was the general belief at Washington that Mr. Pryor had been inspired by some one connected with the Russian Legation.

Old Madeira wine has always been very popular in Washington, especially on the tables of their Honors the Justices of the Supreme Court. For many years supplies were obtained from the old mercantile houses in

Alexandria, which had made direct importations prior to the Revolution. During the Fillmore Administration many Washington cellars were replenished at the sale of the private stock of wines and liquors of the late Josiah Lee, of Baltimore. Fifty demijohns of various brands of Madeira were sold at prices ranging from twenty-four dollars to forty-nine dollars per gallon; and one lot of twenty-two bottles commanded the extreme price of fifteen dollars and fifty cents per bottle, which at five bottles to the gallon is at the rate of seventy-seven dollars and fifty cents per gallon.

Mr. Brady came from New York and opened a "daguerrean saloon" at Washington, and the dim portraits produced on burnished metal were regarded with silent astonishment. Up to that time the metropolis had been visited every winter by portrait and miniature painters, but their work required long sittings and was expensive. The daguerreotypes, which could be produced in a few moments and at a comparatively small cost, became very popular, and Brady's gallery was thronged every morning with distinguished visitors. Mr. Brady was a man of slight figure, well proportioned, with features somewhat resembling the portraits of Vandyke. He possessed wonderful patience, artistic skill, and a thorough acquaintance with the mechanical and chemical features of sun-painting. For the next thirty years he took portraits of almost all the prominent persons who visited Washington City, and in time his reminiscences of them became very interesting.

The citizens of Washington enjoyed a rare treat when Thackeray came to deliver his lectures on the English essayists, wits, and humorists of the eighteenth century. Accustomed to the spread-eagle style

of oratory too prevalent at the Capitol, they were delighted with the pleasing voice and easy manner of the burly, gray-haired, rosy-cheeked Briton, who made no gestures, but stood most of the time with his hands in his pockets, as if he were talking with friends at a cozy fireside. He did not deal, like Cervantes, with the ridiculous extravagance of a fantastic order, nor,



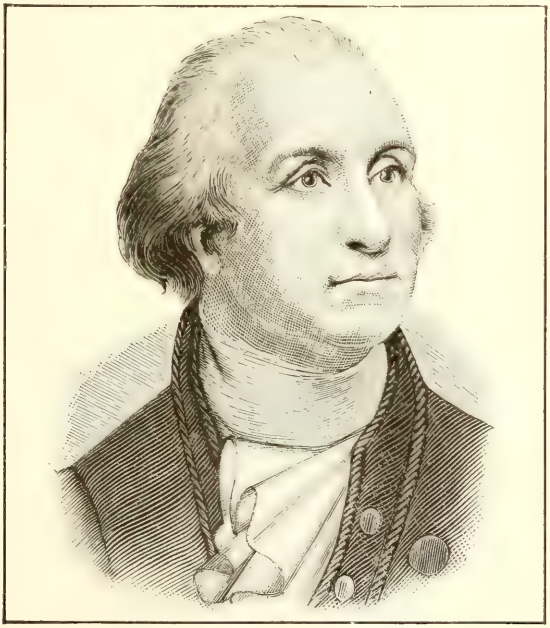
THACKERAY AND MAJOR LANE.

like Washington Irving, with the faults and foibles of men, but he struck at the very heart of the social life of his countrymen's ancestors with caustic and relentless satire. Some of the more puritanical objected to the moral tendencies of Thackeray's lectures, and argued that the naughty scapegraces of the British court should not have been thus exhumed for the edification of an American audience.

Thackeray made himself at home among the working journalists at Washington, and was always asking questions. He was especially interested in the trial of Herbert, a California Congressman, who had shot dead at a hotel table a waiter who had not promptly served him, and he appeared to study old Major Lane, a "hunter from Kentucky," "half horse and half alligator," but gentlemanly in his manners, and partial to rye-whisky, ruffled shirts, gold-headed canes, and draw-poker. The Major had fought—so he said—under Jackson at New Orleans, under Houston at San Jacinto, and under Zach. Taylor at Buena Vista, and he was then prosecuting a claim before Congress for his services as an agent among the Yazoo Indians. It was better than a play to hear him talk, and to observe Thackeray as he listened.

Rembrandt Peale visited Washington during the Pierce Administration, and greatly interested those who met him with his reminiscences. His birth took place while his father, Charles Wilson Peale, was in camp at Valley Forge. After the War of the Revolution, and while Washington was a resident of Philadelphia, Charles Wilson Peale painted several portraits of him. Young Rembrandt used to pass much of his time in the studio, and in 1786, when the best of the portraits was painted, he stood at the back of his father's chair watching the operation. In 1795, when he was but seventeen years of age, he had himself become a good painter, and Washington then honored him with three sittings of three hours each. The young artist, who was naturally timid and nervous in such a presence and at such a work, got his father to begin a portrait at the same time, and to keep the General in conversation while the work went on. The study of

Washington's head then painted by Rembrandt Peale served as the basis of the famous portrait of him which he afterward painted, and which was pronounced by contemporaries of Washington his best likeness. It was exhibited to admiring crowds in Europe and the United States, and in 1832 was purchased for two



REMBRANDT PEALE'S WASHINGTON.

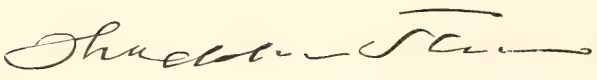
thousand dollars by the Federal Government, to be hung in the Capitol.

Rev. Charles W. Upham, who represented the Essex district of Massachusetts in Congress, was at one time a victim to our copyright laws. He had compiled with care a life of General Washington, from his own letters, which was, therefore, in some sense, an autobiog-

raphy. The holders of copyright in Washington's letters, including, if I am not mistaken, Judge Washington and Dr. Sparks, considered the publication of this book by Marsh, Capen & Lyons, of Boston, who had no permission from them, as an infringement of their copyright. The curious question thus presented was tried before Judge Story, who held that it was an infringement, and granted an injunction against the sale of the book. The plates, thus becoming worthless here, were sold to an English house, which printed them.

Jullien, the great musician, gave two concerts at the National Theatre, Washington, in the fall of 1853, with his large orchestra and a galaxy of glorious stars. The effect of many of their performances was overpowering, and the enraptured multitude often for a moment appeared to forget their accustomed restraints, and arose to wave their scarfs or hats in triumph, or blended their shouts of applause with the concluding strains of the "Quadrille Nationale," and other entrancing pieces. The solos were all magnificent and the entire performance was a triumphant success.

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THADDEUS STEVENS was born at Peacham, Vermont, April 4th, 1792; was a Representative from Pennsylvania, December 3d, 1849, to March 1st, 1853, and again December 5th, 1859, to August 11th, 1868, when he died at Washington City.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

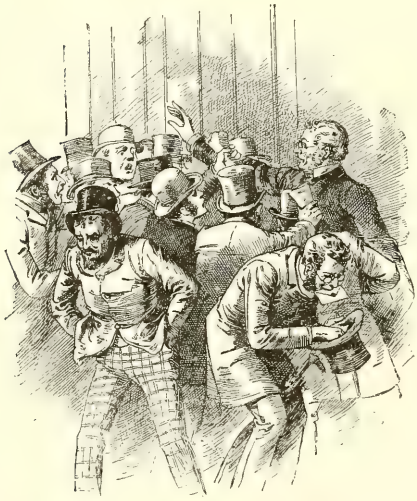
### CHIVALRY, AT HOME AND ABROAD.

EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS—THE OSTEND MANIFESTO—MR. BUCHANAN AT LONDON—THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA DEBATE—SPICY WORDS BETWEEN BRECKINRIDGE AND CUTTING—DIPLOMATIC CARD-PLAYING—ASSISTANT SECRETARY THOMAS—THE AMOSKEAG VETERANS.

PRESIDENT PIERCE, seconded by Secretary Marcy, made his foreign appointments with great care. Mr. Buchanan was sent as Minister to the Court of St. James, a position for which he was well qualified, and John Y. Mason, of Virginia, was accredited to France. The support given to the Democratic party by the adopted citizens of the Republic was acknowledged by the appointment of Mr. Soulé, a Frenchman, who had been expelled from his native land as a revolutionist, as Minister to Spain; Robert Dale Owen, an Englishman, noted for his agrarian opinions, as Minister to Naples, and Auguste Belmont, Austrian born, Minister to the Netherlands.

The civil appointments, of every official grade, large in their number and extended in their influence upon various localities and interests, were made with distinguished ability and sagacity, and were received with general and widespread satisfaction. The President's thorough knowledge of men, his intimate acquaintance with the relations of sections heretofore temporarily separated from the great mass of the Democracy, and his quick perception of the ability and character essen-

tial to the faithful performance of duty were active throughout, and he kept constantly in sight his avowed determination to unite the Democratic party upon the principles by which he won his election. Where so many distinguished names were presented for his consideration, and where disappointment was the inevitable fate of large numbers, a degree of complaint was unavoidable. But no sooner was the fund of Executive patronage well-nigh exhausted than might be heard "curses, not loud but deep." Presently, as the number of disappointed place-hunters increased, the tide of indignation began to swell, and the chorus of discontent grew louder and louder, until the whole land was filled with the clamors of a multitudinous army of martyrs. For the first three months after the inauguration the Democratic party was a model of decorum, harmony, and contentment. All was delight and enthusiasm. Frank Pierce was the man of the time; his Cabinet was an aggregation of the wisdom of the country; his policy the very perfection of statesmanship. Even the Whigs did not utter one word of discontent. Frank Pierce was still President, his Cabinet unchanged, his policy the same, but all else, how changed! But it was no fault of his. He had but fifty



OFFICE SEEKERS.

thousand offices to dispense, which, in the nature of things, could go but a short way to appease the hunger of two hundred thousand applicants. For every appointment there were two disappointments, for every friend secured he made two enemies. A state of universal satisfaction was succeeded by a state of violent discontent, and the Administration, without any fault of its own, encountered the opposition of those who but a few weeks previously were loudest in its praise.

In order to re-enlist public favor and to reunite the Democratic party, Messrs. Buchanan, Mason, and Soulé, United States Ministers respectively to England, France, and Spain, were ordered by the President, through Mr. Marcy, to meet at Ostend. There, after mature deliberations, and in obedience to instructions from Washington, they prepared, signed, and issued a brief manifesto, declaring that the United States ought to purchase Cuba with as little delay as possible. Political, commercial, and geographical reasons therefor were given, and it was asserted in conclusion that "the Union can never enjoy repose, nor possess reliable security, so long as Cuba is not embraced within its boundaries." This was carrying out the views of Mr. Buchanan, who, when Secretary of State, in June, 1848, had, under the instructions of President Polk, offered Spain one hundred million of dollars for the island.

Mr. Buchanan had accepted the mission to England, that he might from a distance pull every available wire to secure the nomination in 1856, coyly denying all the time that he wanted to be President. In a heretofore unpublished letter of his, dated September 5th, 1853, which is in my collection of autographs, he says: "You propounded a question to me before I

left the United States which I have not answered. I shall now give it an answer in perfect sincerity, without the slightest mental reservation. I have neither the desire nor the intention again to become a candidate for the Presidency. On the contrary, this mission is tolerable to me alone because it will enable me gracefully and gradually to retire from an active participation in party politics. Should it please Providence to prolong my days and restore me to my native land, I hope to pass the remnant of my life at Wheatland, in comparative peace and tranquillity. This will be most suitable both to my age (now past sixty-two) and my inclinations. But whilst these are the genuine sentiments of my heart, I do not think I ought to say that in no imaginable state of circumstances would I consent to be nominated as a candidate."

Mr. Buchanan was greatly exercised over the court costume which he was to wear, and finally compromised by adopting a black evening dress suit, with the addition of a small sword, which distinguished him from the servants at the royal palace. He had always been jealous of Governor Marcy, then Secretary of State, and instead of addressing his despatches to the Department of State, as is customary for foreign Ministers, he used to send them directly to the President. It is said that General Pierce rather enjoyed seeing his chief Cabinet officer thus snubbed, and that he used to aggravate the slight by frequently sending answers to Mr. Buchanan's communications himself.

Senator Judah Peter Benjamin was a dapper little gentleman, with a small waist, who was always faultlessly dressed, and who was one of the hardest working members of the Senate. Born a British subject on one of the West India Islands, he became a citizen of the

United States by domicile very early in life. His boyhood was spent in a small fruit-shop kept by his father at Charleston, but wealthy Hebrews aided him in obtaining an education, and his indomitable will enabled him in due time to enter upon the practice of the law at New Orleans. There, where nearly all legal proceedings were then duplicated in French and English, his perfect familiarity with both languages, with his ability and his eloquence, soon enabled him to amass a fortune. He married a Gentile, but he was always identified with the Hebrew faith. One day when a Senator of German extraction taunted him with being a Jew, he said, in his silvery tones: "The gentleman will please remember that when his half-civilized ancestors were hunting the wild boar in the forests of Silesia, mine were the princes of the earth." The Senate was electrified, and the carping Senator was quite effectually silenced.

The proposition to repeal the Missouri Compromise of 1820, and to admit Kansas and Nebraska as States, with or without slavery, as their citizens might respectively elect, gave rise to exciting debates. The North was antagonistic to the South, and the champions of freedom looked defiantly at the defenders of slavery. One of the most exciting scenes in the House of Representatives was between Mr. John C. Breckinridge, of Kentucky, and Mr. Francis B. Cutting, a New York lawyer, who had defeated Mr. James Brooks, who then was editor of the *Express*.

Mr. Cutting was advocating the passage of the Senate bill, and complaining that the friends of the Administration not only wanted to consign it to the Committee of the Whole—that tomb of the Capulets—but they had encouraged attacks in their organs upon him

and those who stood with him. Mr. Breckinridge interrupted him while he was speaking, to ask if a remark made was personal to himself, but Mr. Cutting said that it was not. Mr. Breckinridge, interrupting Mr. Cutting a second time, said that while he did not want to charge the gentleman from New York with having intentionally played the part of an assassin, he had said, and he could not now take it back, that the act, to all intents, was like throwing one arm around it in friendship, and stabbing it with the other—to kill the bill. As to a statement by the gentleman that in the hour of his greatest need the "Hards" of New York had come to his assistance, he could not understand it, and asked for an explanation.

"I will give it," replied Mr. Cutting. "When, during the last Congressional canvass in Kentucky, it was intimated that the friends of the honorable Representative from the Lexington district needed assistance to accomplish his election, my friends in New York made up a subscription of some fifteen hundred dollars and transmitted it to Kentucky, to be employed for the benefit of the gentleman, who is now the peer of Presidents and Cabinets."

"Yes, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Breckinridge, springing to his feet, "and not only the peer of Presidents and Cabinets, but the peer of the gentleman from New York, fully and in every respect."

A round of applause followed this assertion, and ere it had subsided the indomitable Mike Walsh availed himself of the opportunity to give his colleague a rap. "When [he said] we came here we protested against the Administration interfering in the local affairs of the State of New York, and now my colleague states that a portion of his constituents have been guilty of

the same interference in the affairs of the people of Kentucky." "Is that all," said Mr. Cutting, in a sneering tone, "that the gentleman from New York rose for?" "That's all," replied Mr. Walsh, "but I will be on hand by and by, though."

Mr. Breckinridge, his eyes flashing fire, remarked in measured tones that the gentleman from New York should have known the truth of what he uttered before he pronounced it on this floor. He (Mr. B.) was not aware that any intimations were sent from Kentucky that funds were needed to aid in his election, nor was he aware that they were received. He did not undertake to say what the fact might be in regard to what the gentleman had said, but he had no information whatever of that fact. He (Mr. B.) came to Congress not by the aid of money, but against the use of money. The gentleman could not escape by any subtlety or by any ingenuity a thorough and complete exposure of any ingenious device to which he might resort for the purpose of putting gentlemen in a false position, and the sooner he stopped that game the better.

Mr. Cutting, who was also very much excited, made an angry reply, in which he stated "that he had given the gentleman an opportunity of indulging in one of the most violent, inflammatory, and personal assaults that had ever been known upon this floor; and he would ask how could the gentleman disclaim any attack upon him. The whole tenor and scope of the speech of the gentleman from Kentucky was an attack upon his motives in moving to commit the bill. It was in vain for the gentleman to attempt to escape by disclaiming it; the fact was before the Committee. But he would say to the gentleman that he scorned his imputation. How dare the gentleman undertake to

assert that he had professed friendship for the measure with a view to kill it, to assassinate it by sending it to the bottom of the calendar? And then, when he said that the Committee of the Whole had under its control the House bill upon this identical subject, which the Committee intended to take up, discuss, amend, and report to the House, the gentleman skulked behind the Senate bill, which had been sent to the foot of the calendar!"

"Skulked!" hissed Mr. Breckinridge. "I ask the gentleman to withdraw that word!"

"I withdraw nothing!" replied Mr. Cutting. "I have uttered what I have said in answer to one of the most violent and most personal attacks that has ever been witnessed upon this floor."

"Then," said Mr. Breckinridge, "when the gentleman says I skulked, he says what is false!" The Southern members began to gather around the excited Kentuckian, and the Speaker, pounding with his gavel, pronounced the offensive remark out of order.

"Mr. Chairman," quietly remarked Mr. Cutting, "I do not intend upon this floor to answer the remark which the gentleman from Kentucky has thought proper to employ. It belongs to a different region. It is not here that I will desecrate my lips with undertaking to retort in that manner."

This settled the question, and a duel appeared to be inevitable. The usual correspondence followed, but President Pierce and other potent friends of the would-be belligerents interfered, and the difficulty was amicably adjusted, under "the code of honor," without recourse to weapons.

Governor Marcy, President Pierce's Secretary of State, was a great card-player, and Mr. Labouchere

tells a good story which happened when he was Secretary of the British Legation at Washington. "I went," said he, "with the British Minister, to a pleasant watering-place in Virginia, where we were to meet Mr. Marcy, the then United States Secretary of State, and a reciprocity treaty between Canada and the United States was to be quietly discussed. Mr. Marcy, the most genial of men, was as cross as a bear. He would agree to nothing. 'What on earth is the matter with your chief?' I said to a secretary who accompanied him. 'He does not have his rubber of whist,' answered the secretary. After this every night the Minister and I played at whist with Mr. Marcy and his secretary, and every night we lost. The stakes were very trifling, but Mr. Marcy felt flattered by beating the Britishers at what he called their own game. His good humor returned, and every morning when the details of the treaty were being discussed we had our revenge, and scored a few points for Canada." A true account of the money designedly lost at Washington by diplomats, heads of departments, and Congressmen would give a deep insight into the secret history of legislation. What Representative could vote against the claim of a man whose money he had been winning, in small sums, it is true, all winter?

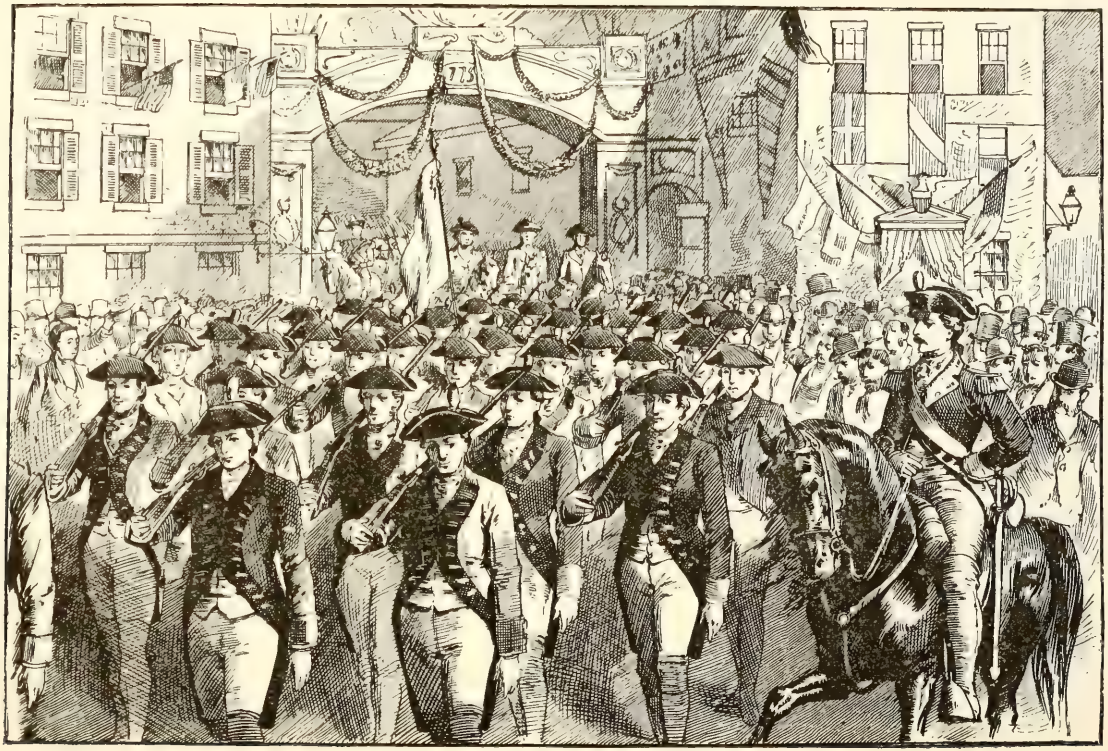
General John A. Thomas, of New York, who was Assistant Secretary of State during a part of President Pierce's Administration, was a fine, soldierly looking man, very gentlemanly in his deportment. He was a native of Tennessee, and was for several years an officer in the United States Army, commanding at one time the corps of cadets. He married a Miss Ronalds, who belonged to an old New York family, and he took her with him when he went abroad as Solicitor to the

Board of Commissioners appointed by the President to adjust the claims of American citizens upon the British Government. Mr. Buchanan was the American Minister at the Court of St. James, and Mr. Sickles Secretary of Legation. Mrs. Thomas having expressed a wish to be presented at court, Mr. Buchanan assented, and, when the day for presentation arrived, requested Mrs. Thomas to place herself under the charge of Mrs. Sickles, who would accompany her to the palace of St. James. This arrangement Mrs. Thomas decidedly declined, and by so doing gave so much offense to Mr. Buchanan that she was never presented at court at all. Nor did the matter end here. When Mr. Buchanan came to the Presidency he found General Thomas filling the office of Assistant Secretary of State. From this office he immediately ejected him, for the old grudge he bore Mrs. Thomas for refusing to go to court with Mrs. Sickles, as General Thomas declared to his friends. Mr. Buchanan was always very fond of Mr. Sickles and his wife, and it was said that he narrowly escaped being in the Sickles' house when Barton Key was shot down after coming from it.



MRS. DANIEL SICKLES.

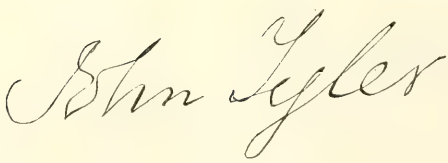
The Amoskeag Veterans, of Manchester, New



RECEPTION OF THE AMOSKEAG VETERANS.

Hampshire, a volunteer corps which wore the Continental uniform and marched to the music of drums and fifes, came to Washington to pay their respects to the President, who received them with lavish hospitality. They visited Mount Vernon under escort of a detachment of volunteer officers, and were escorted by the venerable G. W. P. Custis around the old home of his illustrious relative. At a ball given in the evening the "old man eloquent" wore the epaulettes originally fastened on his shoulders by him who was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." The sword given him by General Washington Mr. Custis had presented to his son-in-law, Captain Robert E. Lee, of the Engineer Corps, during the Mexican campaign.

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JOHN TYLER was born in Charles City County, Virginia March 29th, 1790; was a Representative in Congress from Virginia, December 17th, 1816, to March 3d, 1821; was United States Senator from Virginia, December 3d, 1827, to February 28th, 1836; was elected Vice-President on the Harrison ticket in 1840; became President, after the death of President Harrison, April 4th, 1841; was a delegate to the Peace Convention of 1861, and its President; was a delegate to the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States, which assembled at Richmond in July, 1861; was elected a Representative from Virginia in the first Confederate Congress, but died at Richmond, Virginia, before taking his seat, January 17th, 1862.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### CRYSTALLIZATION OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

FORMATION OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY—THE ELECTION OF SPEAKER—MR. BANKS TRIUMPHANT—DIVISION OF THE SPOILS—A PROTRACTED SESSION—ASSAULT ON HORACE GREELEY—TERRITORIAL DELEGATES—THE SENATE—THE VIRGINIA SENATORS—"HALE," OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

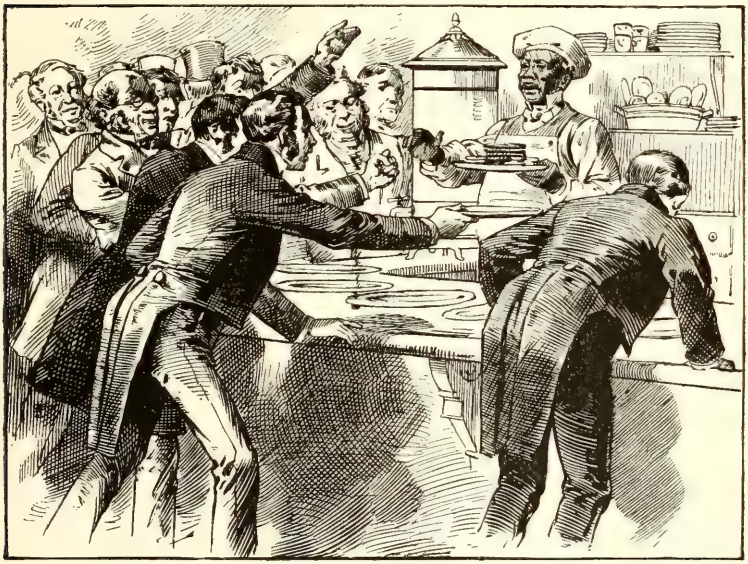
THE repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law reopened the flood-gates of sectional controversy. The Native American organization was used at the North by the leading Abolitionists for the disintegration of the Whigs, and they founded a new political party, with freedom inscribed upon its banners. The Free-Soil Democrats who had rebelled against Southern rule, with the Liberty Whigs, and those who were more openly arrayed against slavery, united, and were victorious at the Congressional elections in the Northern States in the autumn of 1854. "The moral idea became a practical force," and the "Irrepressible Conflict" was commenced. "As Republicans," said Charles Sumner, "we go forth to encounter the oligarchs of slavery."

The great contest was opened by a struggle in the House of Representatives over the Speakership. Nathaniel Prentiss Banks, a Democrat, who had joined the Know-Nothings, was the Northern candidate, although Horace Greeley, with Thurlow Weed and

William Schouler as his aides-de-camp, endeavored to elect Lewis D. Campbell, an Ohio American. The Southern Know-Nothings voted at one time for Henry M. Fuller, of Pennsylvania, but they dropped him like a hot potato when they learned that he had accepted a place on the Republican Committee of his State. William Aiken, a large slaveholder in South Carolina, was the favorite Southern candidate, although the vote of the solid South was successively given to several others. Meanwhile, as day after day passed, the President's message was withheld, and all legislation was at a dead-lock. The Sergeant-at-Arms, Colonel Glossbrenner, an ex-member of the House, obtained a loan of twenty thousand dollars from a bank in Pennsylvania, which enabled him to make advances to impecunious members of both parties, and thus to insure his re-election.

Early in January an attempt was made to "sit it out," and all night the excited House seethed like a boiling caldron; verdant novices were laughed down as they endeavored to make some telling point, while sly old stagers lay in ambush to spring out armed with "points of order." Emasculate conservatives were snubbed by followers of new prophets; belligerent Southrons glared fiercely at phlegmatic Yankees; one or two intoxicated Solons gabbled sillily upon every question, and sober clergymen gaped, as if sleepy and disgusted with political life. Banks, unequaled in his deportment, was as cool as a summer cucumber; Aiken, his principal opponent, was courteous and gentlemanlike to all; Giddings wore a broad-brimmed hat to shield his eyes from the rays of the gas chandelier; Stephens, of Georgia, piped forth his shrill response, and Senator Wilson went busily about "whipping-in."

Soon after midnight the South Americans began to relate their individual experience in true camp-meeting style, the old-line Democrats were rampant, the few Whigs were jubilant, and the bone of Catholicism was pretty well picked by those who had been peeping at politics through dark-lanterns, and who were "know-nothings" about what they had done. In short, every



COMPLETELY EATEN OUT.

imaginable topic of discussion, in order or out of order, was lugged in to kill time.

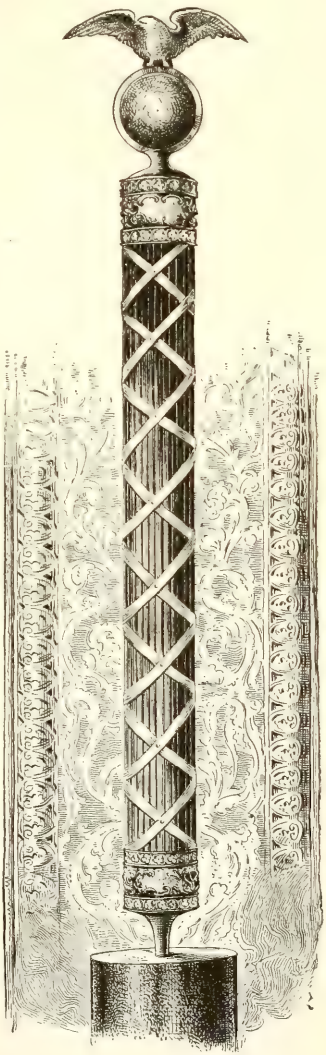
Meanwhile the supply of ham at the eating-counter below-stairs was exhausted, the oysters were soon after minus, and those who had brought no lunch had to mumble ginger-cakes. It was remarked by good judges that as the morning advanced the coffee grew weaker, suggesting a possibility that the caterer could not distinguish between cocoa and cold water, and only

replenished his boiler with the latter. There were more questions of order, more backing people up to vote, and an increase of confusion. Men declared that they would "stick," while they entreated others to shift, and as daylight streamed in upon the scene, the political gamesters had haggard and careworn countenances. The result of the night's work was no choice.

At last, after nine long, tedious weeks, the agony was over, and Massachusetts furnished the Thirty-fourth Congress with its Speaker. Although what was termed "Americanism" played an important though concealed part in the struggle, the real battle was between the North and the South—the stake was the extension of slavery. When the decisive vote was reached the galleries were packed with ladies, who, like the gentle dames in the era of chivalry, sat interested lookers-on as the combating parties entered the arena. On the one side was Mr. Aiken, a Representative from the chivalric, headstrong State of South Carolina, the son of an Irishman, the inheritor of an immense wealth, and the owner of eleven hundred slaves. Opposed to him was Mr. Banks, of Massachusetts, a State which was the very antipodes of South Carolina in politics, who, by his own exertions, unaided by a lineage or wealth or anything save his own indomitable will, had conquered a position among an eminently conservative people. Voting was commenced, and each minute seemed an age, as some members had to explain their votes, but at length the tellers began to "foot up." It had been agreed that the result should be announced by the teller belonging to the party of the successful candidate, and when the sheet was handed to Mr. Benson, of Maine, the "be-

ginning of the end" was known. Radiant with joy, he announced that Nathaniel P. Banks, Jr., had received one hundred and three votes; William Aiken, one hundred; H. M. Fuller, six; L. D. Campbell, four, and Daniel Wells, Jr., of Wisconsin, one. The election was what a Frenchman would call an "accomplished fact," and hearty cheers were heard on all sides.

Magnanimity is not a prominent ingredient in political character, and some factious objections were made, but Mr. Aiken soon put a stop to them. Rising with that dignity peculiar to wealthy and portly gentlemen of ripe years, he requested permission to conduct the Speaker-elect to the chair. This disarmed opposition, and after some formalities, he was authorized, by a large majority resolve, to perform the duty, accompanied by Messrs. Fuller and Campbell. Cheer after cheer, with waving of hats and ladies' handkerchiefs, announced that on the one hundred and thirty-third vote the Speaker's chair was occupied.



THE SPEAKER'S MACE.

The mace, emblem of the

Speaker's authority, was brought from its resting-place and elevated at his side. The House was organized.

The address of Mr. Banks, free from all cant, and delicately alluding to those American principles to



SPEAKER NATHANIEL P. BANKS.

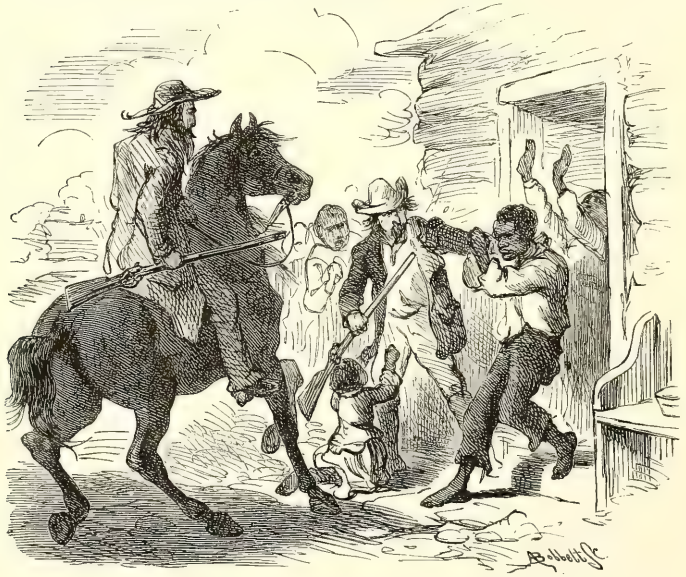
which he owed his office, was happily conceived and admirably delivered. Then old Father Giddings, standing beneath the large chandelier, with his silvery locks flowing picturesquely around his head, held up his

hand and administered the oath of office. The authoritative gavel was handed up by Colonel Forney, who was thanked by a resolution complimenting him for the ability with which he had presided during the protracted contest, and then the House adjourned.

It then became necessary to divide the spoils, and after an exciting contest, Cornelius Wendell, a Democratic nominee, was elected Printer to the House by Republican votes, in consideration of certain percentages of his profits paid to designated parties. The House binding was given to Mr. Williams, editor of the Toledo *Blade*, a lawyer by profession, who had never bound a book in his life. Mr. Robert Farnham paid him a considerable sum for his contract, and the work was done by Mr. Tretler, a practical bookbinder. Mr. Simon Hanscomb, who had been efficient in bringing about the nomination of Mr. Banks, received a twelve-hundred dollar sinecure clerkship, and others who had aided in bringing about the result were cared for. One Massachusetts Representative had his young son appointed a page by the doorkeeper, but when Speaker Banks learned of it, he ordered the appointment to be canceled. Luckily for the lad, the father was enabled to secure for him an appointment as a cadet at West Point, and he became a gallant officer.

The first session of the Thirty-fourth Congress was protracted until the 18th of August, 1856, and it was distinguished by acrimonious debate. The most remarkable speaker was Mr. Stephens, of Georgia, of whom it might be said, as of St. Paul, "his bodily presence is weak," while his thin, shrill voice, issuing as it were by jerks from his narrow chest, recalled John Randolph. Contrasting widely in size was the burly Humphrey Marshall, of Kentucky, who had won

laurels in the Mexican War, as had the gallant General Quitman, a Representative from Mississippi. Henry Winter Davis, of Baltimore, and Anson Burlingame, of Boston, were the most eloquent and enthusiastic of those who had been washed into Congress by the Know-Nothing wave, and with them had come some ignorant and bigoted fellows. Equally prominent, but better qualified, on the other side was John



THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW IN OPERATION.

Kelly, who had defeated the candidates brought out by "Sam" and "Sambo" to oppose him. The venerable Joshua R. Giddings, of Ohio, who led the abolition forces, was as austerely bitter as Cato was in ancient Utica when he denounced the Fugitive Slave Law, under the operations of which many runaway slaves were captured at the North and returned to their Southern masters.

The eloquence of Mr. Clingman, who represented North Carolina, was alternately enlivened by epigrammatic wit or envenomed by scorching reply. Mr. Justin S. Morrill, of Vermont, was commencing a long and useful Congressional career. Mr. Schuyler Colfax, an editor-politician, represented an Indiana district. The veteran Mr. Charles J. Faulkner, with his choleric son-in-law, Mr. Thomas S. Bocock, and the erratic and chivalrous Judge Caskie, represented Virginia districts. Mr. Elihu B. Washburne, of Illinois, sat near his brother, Israel D. Washburne, of Maine. Mr. Lyman Trumbull, of Illinois, was then an ardent Republican, and so was Mr. Francis E. Spinner, of New York, whose wonderful autograph afterward graced public securities.

Mr. Albert Rust, one of the Representatives from Arkansas, won some notoriety by attacking Horace Greeley at his hotel. The next day he was brought before Justice Morsell, and gave bonds to appear at the next session of the Criminal Court. He appeared to glory in what he had done. Mr. Greeley was evidently somewhat alarmed, and during the remainder of his sojourn at Washington his more stalwart friends took care that he should not be unaccompanied by a defender when he appeared in public.

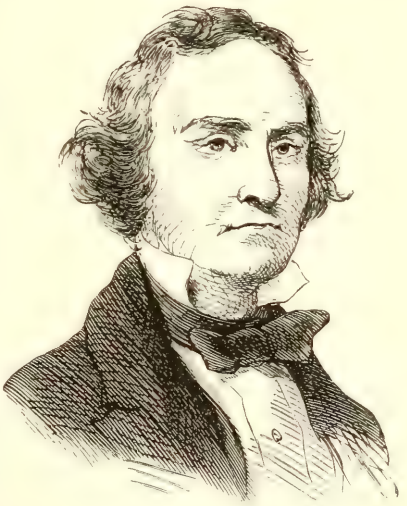
The Territory of Utah was represented in the House by Mr. John N. Burnhisel, a small, dapper gentleman, who in deportment and tone of voice resembled Robert J. Walker. It was very rarely that he participated in debate, and his forte was evidently taciturnity. In private conversation he was fluent and agreeable, defending the peculiar domestic institutions of his people. The delegate from Oregon was Mr. Joseph Lane, who had served bravely in the Mexican War, gone to Oregon as its first Governor, and been returned as its

first Territorial Delegate. He was a keen-eyed, trimly built man, of limited education, but the possessor of great common sense. Henry M. Rice, the first Delegate from the Territory of Minnesota, had been for years an Indian trader in connection with the American Fur Company, and was thoroughly acquainted with the people he represented, and whose interests he faithfully served. New Mexico, then a *terra incognita*, was represented by Don José Manuel Gallegos, a native of the Territory, who had been educated in the Catholic schools of Mexico, and who was devoted to the Democratic party. He had as a rival Don Miguel A. Otero, also a native of New Mexico, who had been educated at St. Louis, and whose Democracy was of the more liberal school. He successfully contested the seat of Mr. Gallegos in the Thirty-fourth Congress, and secured his re-election in the two ensuing ones.

The Senate was behind the House in entering into the "irrepressible conflict." The death of Vice-President King having left the chair of the presiding officer vacant, it was filled *pro tempore* by Mr. Jesse D. Bright, of Indiana. He was a man of fine presence, fair abilities, and a fluent speaker, thoroughly devoted to the Democratic party as then controlled by the South. He regarded the anti-slavery movement as the offspring of a wanton desire to meddle with the affairs of other people, and to grasp political power, or—to use the words of one who became an ardent Republican —as the product of hypocritical selfishness, assuming the mask and cant of philanthropy merely to rob the South and to enrich New England. The rulings of the Chair, while it was occupied by Senator Bright, were all in favor of the South and of the compromises which had been entered into. The Secretary of the

Senate, its Sergeant-at-Arms, its door-keepers, messengers, and even its little pages, were subservient to the South.

Mr. James Murray Mason, a type of the old patrician families of Virginia, was one of the few remaining polished links between the statesmen of those days and of the past. His first ancestor in Virginia, George Mason, commanded a regiment of cavalry in the Cavalier army of Charles Stuart (afterward Charles II) in the campaign against the Roundhead troops of Oliver Cromwell. After the defeat of the royal forces at the battle of Worcester, Colonel Mason escaped to Virginia, and soon afterward established a plantation on the Potomac, where his lineal descendants resided generation after generation. The future Senator was educated at Georgetown, in the then infant days of the Federal city, and the society of such statesmen as then sat in the councils of the republic was in itself an education. He possessed a stalwart figure, a fine, imposing head covered with long gray hair, a pleasing countenance, and a keen eye. No Senator had a greater reverence for the peculiar institutions of the South, or a more thorough contempt for the Abolitionists of the North. His colleague, Mr. Robert M. T.



JAMES MURRAY MASON.

Hunter, was of less aristocratic lineage, but had received a more thorough education. He had served in the Twenty-sixth Congress as Speaker of the House, and he was thoroughly acquainted with parliamentary law and usages. He had also paid great attention to finance and to the tariff questions. Solidly built, with a massive head and a determined manner, he was very impressive in debate, and his speeches on financial questions were listened to with great attention.



JOHN P. HALE.

John P. Hale was a prominent figure in the Senate, and never failed to command attention. The keen shafts of the Southerners, aimed at him, fell harmlessly at his feet, and his wonderful good nature disarmed malicious opposition. Those who felt that he had gone far astray in his political opinions did not accuse him of selfish motives, sordid purposes, or degraded intrigues. His was the "chasseur" style of oratory—now skirmishing on the outskirts of an opponent's position, then rallying on some strange point, pouring in a rattling fire, standing firm against a charge, and ever displaying a perfect independence of action and a disregard of partisan drill.

President Pierce felt very unkindly toward Mr. Hale. At an evening reception, when the Senator from New

Hampshire approached, escorting his wife and daughter, the President spoke to the ladies, but deliberately turned his back upon Mr. Hale. This action by one so courteous as was General Pierce created much comment, and was the subject of earnest discussion in drawing-rooms as well as at the Capitol.



LEWIS CASS was born at Exeter, New Hampshire, October 9th, 1782; crossed the Allegany Mountains on foot when seventeen years of age to Ohio, where he commenced the practice of law; was colonel of the Third Ohio Volunteers, which was a part of General Hull's army, surrendered at Detroit, August 16th, 1812; was Governor of Michigan Territory, 1813–1831; was Secretary of War under President Jackson, 1831–1836; was Minister to France, October 4th, 1836, to November 12th, 1842; was United States Senator from Michigan, December 1st, 1845, to May 29th, 1848; was defeated as the Democratic candidate for President in the fall of 1848; was elected to fill the vacancy in the Senate, occasioned by his own resignation, December 3d, 1849, to March 3d, 1857; was Secretary of State under President Buchanan, March 4th, 1857, to December 17th, 1860, when he resigned; retired to Detroit, Michigan, where he died, June 17th, 1866.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### POLITICAL STORM AND SOCIAL SUNSHINE.

SUMNER, OF MASSACHUSETTS—THE ASSAULT ON SUMNER—TROUBLOUS TIMES—CONGRESSIONAL COURTESIES—SENATORIAL WIT—CONVENTION OF OLD SOLDIERS—SOCIAL ROUTINE AT THE WHITE HOUSE—SOCIETY GATHERINGS.

CHARLES SUMNER had not spoken on the slavery question immediately on taking his seat in the Senate, and some of his abolition friends in Boston had began to fear that he, too, had been enchanted by the Circe of the South. Theodore Parker said, in a public speech: "I wish he had spoken long ago, but it is for him to decide, not us. 'A fool's bolt is soon shot,' while a wise man often reserves his fire." But Senator Seward, who had been taught by experience how far a Northern man could go in opposition to the slave-power, advised him that "retorted scorn" would be impolitic and perhaps unsafe.

Mr. Sumner, however, soon began to occupy the floor of the Senate Chamber when he could get an opportunity. His speeches were able and exhaustive disquisitions, polished and repolished before their delivery, and arraigning the South in stately and measured sentences which contained stinging rebukes. The boldness of his language soon attracted public attention and secured his recognition as the chosen champion of Freedom. One afternoon, while he was speaking, Senator Douglas, walking up and down behind the Presi-

dent's chair in the old Senate Chamber and listening to him, remarked to a friend: "Do you hear that man? He may be a fool, but I tell you that man has pluck. I wonder whether he knows himself what he is doing? I am not sure whether I should have the courage to say those things to the men who are scowling around him."

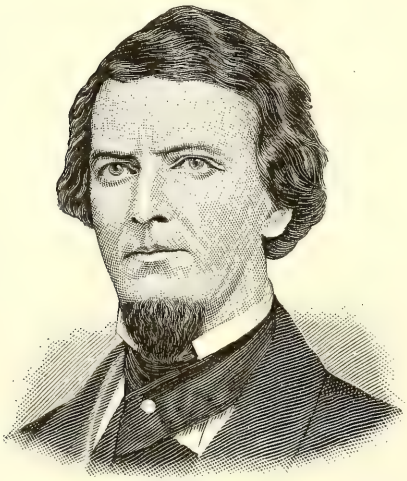
Mr. Sumner was at that time strikingly prepossessing in his appearance:

> "Not that his dress attracted vulgar eyes,
> With Fashion's gewgaws flauntingly display'd;
> He had the bearing of the gentleman;
> And nobleness of mind illumined his mien,
> Winning at once attention and respect."

He was over six feet in stature, with a broad chest and graceful manners. His features, though not perhaps strictly regular, were classical, and naturally of an animated cast; his hazel eyes were somewhat inflamed by night-work; he wore no beard, except a small pair of side-whiskers, and his black hair lay in masses over his high forehead. I do not remember to have ever seen two finer-looking men in Washington than Charles Sumner and Salmon P. Chase, as they came together to a dinner-party at the British Legation, each wearing a blue broadcloth dress-coat with gilt buttons, a white waistcoat, and black trowsers.

The conservative Senators soon treated Mr. Sumner as a fanatic unfit to associate with them, and they refused him a place on any committee, as "outside of any political organization." This stimulated him in the preparation of a remarkable arraignment of the slave-power, which he called the "crime against Kansas." It was confidentially printed before its delivery that advance copies might be sent to distant cities, and nearly every one permitted to read it, includ-

ing Mr. William H. Seward, advised Mr. Sumner to tone down its offensive features. But he refused. He was not, as his friend Carl Schurz afterward remarked, "conscious of the stinging force of the language he frequently employed," "and he was not unfrequently surprised, greatly surprised, when others found his language offensive." He delivered the speech as it had been written and printed, occupying two days, and he provoked the Southern Senators and their friends beyond measure.



PRESTON S. BROOKS.

Preston S. Brooks, a tall, fine-looking Representative from South Carolina, who had served gallantly in the Mexican War, was incited to revenge certain phrases used by Mr. Sumner, which he was told reflected upon his uncle, Senator Butler. Entering the Senate Chamber one day after the adjournment, he went up to Mr. Sumner, who sat writing at his desk, with his head down, and dealt him several severe blows on the back of his head with a stout gutta-percha cane as he would have cut at him right and left with a dragoon's broadsword.

Mr. Sumner's long legs were stretched beneath his desk, so that he was pinioned when he tried to rise, and the blood from the wound on his head blinded him. In his struggle he wrenched his desk from the floor,

to which it had been screwed, but before he could gain his feet his assailant had gratified his desire to punish him. Several persons had witnessed this murderous assault without interfering, and when Mr. Sumner, stunned and bleeding, was led to a sofa in the anteroom, Mr. Brooks was congratulated on what he had done.

For two years Mr. Sumner was a great sufferer, but the people of Massachusetts, recognizing him as their champion, kept his empty chair in the Senate ready for him to occupy again when he became convalescent. A chivalrous sympathy for him as he endured the cruel treatment prescribed by modern science contributed to his fame, and he became the leading champion of liberty in the impending conflict for freedom. Mr. Seward regarded the situation with a complacent optimism, Mr. Hale good-naturedly joked with the Southern Senators, and Mr. Chase drifted along with the current, all of them adorning but not in any way shaping the tide of events. With Mr. Sumner it was different, for he possessed that root of statesmanship —the power of forethought. Although incapacitated for Senatorial duties, his earnest words, like the blast of a trumpet, echoed through the North, and he was



ANSON BURLINGAME.

recognized as the martyr-leader of the Republican party. The injury to his nervous system was great, but the effect of Brooks' blows upon the slave-holding system was still more injurious. Before Mr. Sumner had resumed his seat both Senator Butler and Representative Brooks had passed away.

The debate in the House of Representatives on a resolution censuring Mr. Brooks for his murderous attack (followed by his resignation and unanimous re-election) was marked by acrimonious altercations, with threats of personal violence by the excited Southerners, who found themselves on the defensive. Henry Wilson and other Northern Congressmen went about armed with revolvers, and gave notice that while they would not fight duels, they would defend themselves if attacked. Mr. Anson Burlingame, who had come from Michigan to complete his studies at Harvard College, married the daughter of a wealthy Boston merchant, and been elected to Congress by the Know-Nothings and Abolitionists, accepted a challenge from Mr. Brooks. He selected the Clifton House, on the Canadian shore of Niagara Falls, as the place of meeting, which the friends of Mr. Brooks declared was done that the duel could not take place, as Mr. Brooks could not pass through the Northern States, where he was so universally hated. Mr. Lewis D. Campbell, who was Mr. Burlingame's second, repelled this insinuation, and was confident that his principal "meant business."

During the administration of President Pierce, Congress created the rank of Lieutenant-General, and General Scott received the appointment. He established his head-quarters at Washington, and appeared on several occasions in full uniform riding a

spirited charger. Colonel Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War, and "Old Chapultepec," as Scott was familiarly called by army officers, did not get along harmoniously, and the President invariably sided with his Secretary of War. Mr. Seward, meanwhile, busily



LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SCOTT.

availed himself of the opportunity to alienate General Scott from his Southern friends.

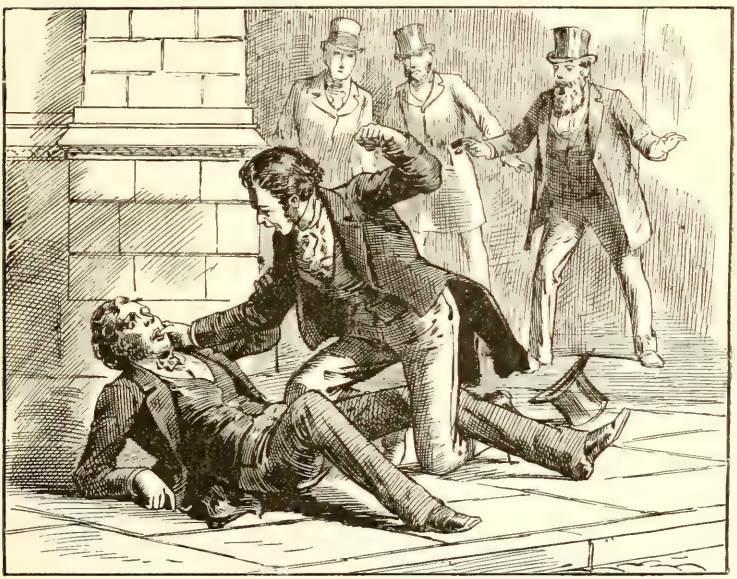
While the Northern and Southern politicians "bit their thumbs" at each other, the followers and the opponents of Senator Douglas in the Democratic

ranks became equally hostile, and in some instances belligerent. I was then the associate editor of the *Evening Star*, a lively local sheet owned and edited by Mr. Douglas Wallach. Walking along Pennsylvania Avenue one afternoon, I saw just before me Mr. Wallach engaged in an excited controversy with an elderly gentleman, who I afterward learned was Mr. "Extra Billy" Smith, an ex-Representative in Congress, who had grown rich by the extra allowances made to him as a mail contractor. Each was calling the other hard names in a loud tone of voice, and just as I reached them they clinched, wrestled for a moment, and then Smith threw Wallach heavily to the sidewalk. Sitting on his prostrate foe, Smith began to pummel him, but at the first blow Wallach got one of his antagonist's thumbs into his mouth, where he held it as if it were in a vise. Smith roared, "Let go my thumb! you are eating it to the bone!" Just then up came Mr. Keitt, of South Carolina, and Mr. Bocock, of Virginia, who went to the rescue of Smith, Keitt saying: "This is no way for gentlemen to settle their disputes," as he forced Wallach's jaws apart, to release the "chawed-up" thumb. Wallach was uninjured, but for several weeks he went heavily armed, expecting that Smith would attack him.

One day Mr. McMullen, of Virginia, in advocating the passage of a bill, alluded to some previous remarks of the gentleman from Ohio, not the one (Mr. Giddings) "who bellowed so loudly," he said, "but to his sleek-headed colleague" (Mr. Taylor). Mr Taylor, who was entering the hall just as this allusion was made to him, replied that he would rather have a sleek head than a blockhead.

Mr. McMullen then said: "I intended nothing per-

sonally offensive, which no one ought to have known better than the gentleman himself. I made use of the remark at which the gentleman exhibited an undue degree of excitement to produce a little levity; neither of us ought to complain of our heads. If united, there would not be more brains than enough for one common head."



AN OLD-FASHIONED ROUGH AND TUMBLE.

Senator Jones, of Tennessee, generally called "Lean Jimmy Jones," was the only Democrat who ever tried to meet Mr. John P. Hale with his own weapons—ridicule and sarcasm. One day, after having been worsted in a verbal tilt, Mr. Jones sought revenge by telling a story as illustrating his opponent's adroitness. There was a Kentuckian, he said, whose name was Sam Wilson, who settled on the margin of the Mississippi River. He had to settle upon high lands, near swamps

from ten to twenty miles wide. The swamps were filled with wild hogs, which were considered a species of public property that every man had a right to shoot, but they did not have a right thereby to shoot tame ones.

Sam had a very large family, and was known to entertain a mortal aversion to work. Yet he always lived well and had plenty of meat. It was inquired how Sam had always so much to eat? Nobody saw him work. He used to hunt and walk about, and he had plenty of bacon constantly on hand. People began to suspect that Sam was not only shooting wild hogs, but sometimes tame ones; so they watched him a good deal to see whether they could not catch him. Sam, however, was too smart for them, and always evaded, just (said Mr. Jones) as the honorable Senator from New Hampshire does. Finally, old man Bailey was walking out one day looking after his hogs at the edge of the swamp, and he saw Sam going along quietly with his gun on his shoulder. Presently Sam's rifle was fired. Bailey walked on to the cane-brake, as he knew he had a very fine hog there, and looking over he found Sam in the act of drawing out his knife to butcher it. Old man Bailey, slapping Sam on the shoulder, said, "I have caught you at last." "Caught thunder!" said Sam; "I will shoot all your blasted hogs that come biting at me in this way." "That is the way," Senator Jones went on to say, "that the Senator from New Hampshire gets out of his scrapes."

Mrs. Pierce came to the White House sorrow-stricken by the sad death of her only child, but she bravely determined not to let her private griefs prevent the customary entertainments. During the sessions of Congress there was a state dinner once a week, to which

thirty-six guests were invited, and on other week-days half-a-dozen guests partook of the family dinner, at which no wine was served. There was also a morning and an evening reception every week in the season, at which Mrs. Pierce, dressed in deep mourning, received with the President.

The evening receptions, which were equivalent to the



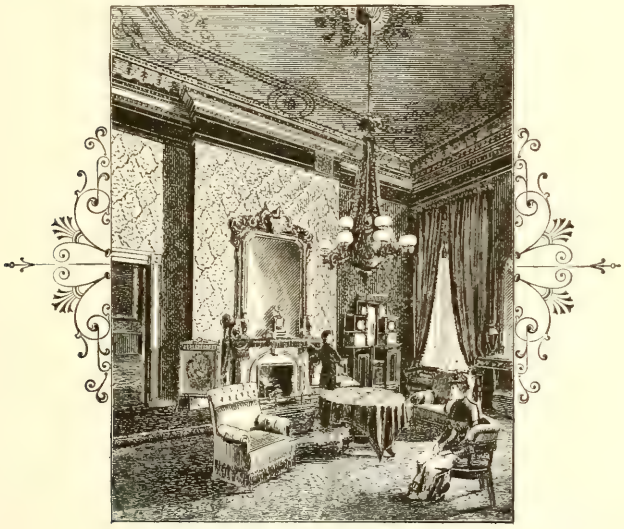
STATE DINING-ROOM.

drawing-rooms of foreign courts, were looked forward to with great interest by strangers and the young people, taxing the busy fingers of mantua-makers, while anxious fathers reluctantly loosened their purse-strings. Carriages and camelias were thenceforth in demand; white kid gloves were kept on the store counters; and hair-dressers wished that, like the fabulous monster, they could each have a hundred hands capable

of wielding the curling-tongs. When the evening arrived, hundreds of carriages might be seen hastening toward the spacious portico of the White House, under which they drove and sat down their freights. In Europe, it would have required at least a battalion of cavalry to have preserved order, but in Washington the coaches quietly fell into the file, and patiently awaited their turn. At the door, the ladies turned into the private dining-room, used as a dressing-room, from whence they soon emerged, nearly all of them in the full glory of evening toilet and radiant with smiles. Falling into line, the visitors passed into the parlors, where they were received by President Pierce and his wife. Between the President and the door stood District Marshal Hoover and one of his deputies, who inquired the name of each unknown person, and introduced each one successively to the President. The names of strangers were generally misunderstood, and they were re-baptized, to their annoyance, but President Pierce, with winning cordiality, shook hands with each one, and put them directly at ease, chatting pleasantly until some one else came along, when he introduced them to his wife.

Leaving the Presidential group and traversing the beautiful Green Drawing-room, the guests entered the famed East Room, which was filled with the talent, beauty, and fashion of the metropolis. Hundreds of either sex occupied the middle of the room or congregated around its walls, which enshrined a maelstrom of beauty, circling and ever changing, like the figures in a kaleidoscope. A prominent figure in these scenes was Edward Everett, cold-blooded and impassible, bright and lonely as the gilt weather-cock over the church in which he officiated ere he became a politician. John

Van Buren—"Prince John," he was called—was another notable, his conversation having the double charm of seeming to be thoroughly enjoyed by the speaker and at the same time to delight the listener. General Scott, in full uniform, was the beau ideal of a military hero, and with him were other brave officers of the army and of the navy, each one having his history ashore or afloat.



GREEN DRAWING-ROOM.

The members of the Diplomatic Corps were marked by the crosses and ribbons which they wore at their buttonholes. Mr. Crampton, who represented Queen Victoria, was a noble specimen of the fine old English gentleman, personally popular, although he did not get along well with Secretary Marcy. The Count de Sartiges, who had recently married Miss Thorndike, of Boston, was an embodiment of French character, as Baron Von Gerolt was of the Prussian, and the little

Kingdom of Belgium had its diplomatist in the august person of Monsieur Henri Bosch Spencer. Senor don Calderon de la Barca, the Spanish Minister, was very popular, as was his gifted wife, so favorably known to American literature. As for the South American Republics, their representatives were generally well dressed and able to put a partner through a polka in a manner gratifying to her and to her anxious mamma.

Then there were the office-seekers, restless, anxious, yet confident of obtaining some place of profit; the office-holders, many of whom saw in passing events the handwriting on the wall which announced their dismissal; the verdant visitors who had come to Washington to see how the country was governed; and generally a score of Indians with gay leggings, scarlet blankets, pouches worked with porcupine quills, and the full glory of war paint. The Marine Band discoursed sweet music, but no refreshments were offered, so, many of the gentlemen, after having escorted the ladies to their homes, repaired to the restaurants, where canvas-back ducks, wild turkeys, and venison steaks were discussed, with a running fire of champagne corks and comments on the evening.

Secretary McClelland's series of evening receptions were thronged with the elite of the South, and at Secretary Guthrie's one could see the majestic belles of Kentucky. The finest diplomatic entertainment was given by the Brazilian Minister, in honor of the birthday of his imperial master, and the evenings when Madame Calderon de la Barca was "at home" always found her attractive drawing-rooms crowded. General Almonte, the Mexican Minister, was noted for his breakfast-parties, as was Senor Marcoleta, of Nicaragua, who was trying hard to have an interoceanic canal cut

through his country. Among the Congressmen, Governor Aiken, of South Carolina, gave the most elegant entertainments, at which the supper-table was ornamented with a silver service, "looted" in after years by soldiers, with the exception of a large solid silver waiter, which was found in a swamp, propped up on four stones, and with a fire under it, some deserters having used it to fry bacon in. A gloom was cast over this gay society, however, by the sad fate of the wife of Mr. Justice Daniels, of the Supreme Court, whose clothes accidentally took fire, and burned her so terribly that she survived but a few hours.



GEORGE WASHINGTON was born February 22d, 1732, in Westmoreland County, Va.; was public Surveyor when sixteen years of age; when nineteen was Military Inspector of one of the districts of Virginia; participated in the French and Indian war, 1753; Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial forces in 1755; married Mrs. Martha Custis, 1759; member of the Continental Congress, 1774; Commander-in-Chief of the Continental forces, 1775; resigned command, December 23d, 1783; President of the United States, April 30th, 1789, to March 4th, 1797; died at Mount Vernon, December 14th, 1799.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### GROWTH OF THE METROPOLIS.

THE CRAMPTON DIFFICULTY—UNSUCCESSFUL FRENCH MEDIATION—THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS—INFORMATION FOR PUBLICATION—MR. BUCHANAN IN ENGLAND—WASHINGTON HOTELS—THE NEW HALL OF THE HOUSE.

MR. CUSHING conceived the idea of getting up a difficulty with Great Britain, as likely to advance the prospects of President Pierce for re-election, and to divert the attention of the people from the anti-slavery question. The pretext was the recruiting in the United States, under the direction of the British diplomatic and consular representatives of the Crown, of men for the regiments engaged in the Crimean War.

Mr. Crampton, the British Minister, was a large, well-built man, with white hair and side whiskers, courtly manners and great conversational powers. His father had been a celebrated surgeon in Ireland, from whom he afterward inherited considerable property. He lived at Carolina Place, on Georgetown Heights, in good style, entertained liberally, rather cultivated the acquaintance of American artists and journalists, and was often seen going on an angling expedition to the Great Falls of the Potomac. He undoubtedly directed the objectionable recruiting without the slightest diplomatic skill. He seemed to go to work in the rough-

est and rudest manner to violate our laws, as if he did not care a copper whether he was discovered or not, and to comment in coarse terms upon our institutions.

Mr. Marcy, as Secretary of State, sent all the facts to Great Britain, his despatch closing with a peremptory demand for the recall of Mr. Crampton and the British Consuls at New York, Philadelphia, and Cincinnati. Accompanying the despatch was an elaborate opinion by Attorney-General Cushing, who cited numerous precedents, and declared that the demand for the recall of those who had been accomplices in the violation of municipal and international laws should not be taken as a cause of offense by Great Britain.

Monsieur de Sartiges, the French Minister, undertook to mediate between Mr. Crampton and Secretary Marcy. Calling at the Department of State, he represented that the continuance of peaceful relations between England and the United States was the earnest wish of his master, the Emperor, who, after his accession to the throne of France, had personally, and through his representatives, evinced on every possible occasion a friendship to the Union. Mr. Marcy expressed satisfaction at the assurance given, and remarked that it did not correspond with other official statements which the United States had received from parties of reputable standing in their own country.

The Minister promptly interposed and denied in the firmest manner the truth of any report adverse to the one which he had just made. The scene at this moment, according to representation, must have been one of interest, for Mr. Marcy, rising from his seat, excused his absence for a moment. He returned in a short time from an adjoining room with an original despatch in his hand, addressed to the Secretary of

War, Mr. Davis, which he opened, and by permission of M. Sartiges, commenced reading extracts.

"Now," said Mr. Marcy, closing the document, "what I have just read to you is from a report of an army commission which was sent out by this Government for the benefit of science, and am I to understand from the free assurance that you have given, that his Majesty, the Emperor, was ignorant of the language used by his War Secretary to the officers of this mission, to whom he not only declined extending the courtesies solicited, but added to the refusal an expression hoping 'that when they met it might be at the cannon's mouth'?" Mr. Marcy continued: "This language is further corroborated by a despatch to this department from our Minister at Paris."



SECRETARY JEFF. DAVIS.

De Sartiges took a hurried leave, but sought revenge by making himself generally disagreeable. He had a row with Mr. Barney, a venerable ex-member of the House and a gentleman of the old school. At evening parties before leaving he would enter the drawing-room where ladies and gentlemen were assembled, with his

hat on and a cigar in his mouth, which he would light by the chandelier. He also persisted in firing at cats and rats from the back windows of his house, thus endangering the lives of persons in the adjacent back yards.

Mr. Crampton was recalled and received a diplomatic promotion, going to St. Petersburg as Sir John Crampton. While there, in 1861, he married a young daughter of Balfe, who afterward procured a divorce, after a curious suit at law, tried before "a jury of matrons."

England was forced to admit that Mr. Crampton's conduct was "notoriously at war with the rights of neutrality and national honor." This was not altogether pleasant to some of the old Nestors of the Senate, who wanted once more to sound the war tocsin. General Cass, who had had a bad fall on the outside steps of the Department of the Interior, was "eager for the fray;" the valiant Clayton, of Delaware, saw an opportunity to wipe out the stigma cast upon his treaty; and although the patriarchal Butler (owner of men-servants and maid-servants, flocks and herds) displayed the lily flag of peace in the Senatorial debate, it was as eccentric as were his wierd-like white locks. Lord Clarendon had then his hands full, but his successors took their revenge in 1862, when attempts were made to obtain recruits in Ireland for the Union Army. Mr. Cushing's elaborate arguments against enlistments for a foreign power were copied and sent back to the Department of State at Washington.

The diplomatic representatives of Queen and Czar, Emperor and Kaiser, were greatly troubled during the Crimean and other European wars, and it would not answer for them to be seen in friendly relations with each other. These foreign diplomats delude themselves

with the belief that they play an important political part at Washington. So they do in the opinion of the marriageable damsels, who are flattered with their flirtations, and in the estimation of snobbish sojourners, who glory in writing home that they have shaken hands with a lord, had a baron to dine with them, or loaned an *attache* a hundred dollars. But, in reality, they are the veriest supernumeraries in the political drama now being performed on the Washington stage. Should any difficulty arise with the foreign powers they represent, special Ministers would be appointed to arrange it, and meanwhile the *Corps Diplomatique* "give tone to society," and is a potent power—in its own estimation.



ONE OF THE LEGATION.

The various legations all exhibit their national characteristics. The British attaches represent the Belgravian of the London magazines; their hair parted just a line off the exact centre, their soft eyes only one degree firmer than those of their sisters', while their beautiful, long side-whiskers are wonderful to behold. The Spanish gentlemen one recognizes by their close-shorn black heads and smooth faces, all courtesy, inevitable pride and secretiveness, eyes that, like those of their women, betray a hundred intrigues, because they seek to conceal so much. The exquisite polite-

ness of the South Americans make you wonder if you really can be dust and ashes after this perfect deference, and their manners are marked by more vivacity than those of the Spanish people. The Russian diplomats have generally been on the most friendly terms with Congressmen and citizens generally, while the Prussians and the Frenchmen have had several little difficulties with the Department of State and with the residents of Washington.

Although Mr. Marcy was unwilling to cater for the favor of the press to the extent which characterized the conduct of many other public men, he generally had a good word for the reporters and correspondents whom he met. "Well, Mr. ——," he would say, as he walked up the steps of his office in the morning, to some member of the press, who affected or had a great acquaintance with the secrets of State—"Well, what is the news in the State Department? You know I have always to go to the newspaper men to find out what is going on here." At another time he would suggest a paragraph which, he would quizzically intimate, might produce an alarm in political circles, improvising, for example, at a party of Senator Seward's, some story in the ordinary letter-writer style about Seward and Marcy being seen talking together, and ending with ominous speculations as to an approaching coalition, etc., in doing which he would happily hit off the writers for the press.

Mr. Cushing was more accommodating. He would converse freely with those correspondents in whom he had confidence, and permit them to copy his opinions in advance of their delivery upon their pledges that they should not be printed before they were officially made public. He wrote a great many editorials, some-

what ponderous and verbose, for the Washington *Union*, and the elaborate statements on executive matters made by correspondents who enjoyed his favor were often dictated by him.

Mr. Buchanan, removed from the intrigues of home politics, kept up an active correspondence with his friends. "I expected," he wrote to Mr. Henry A. Wise, "ere this to have heard from you. You ought to remember that I am now a stranger in a strange land, and that the letters of so valued a friend as yourself would be to me a source of peculiar pleasure. I never had any heart for this mission, and I know that I shall never enjoy it. Still, I am an optimist in my philosophy, and shall endeavor to make my sojourn here as useful to my country and as agreeable to myself as possible.

"I have been in London," Mr. Buchanan went on to say, "long enough to form an opinion that the English people generally are not friendly to the United States. They look upon us with jealous eyes, and the public journals generally, and especially the Leviathan *Times*, speak of us in terms of hostility. The *Times* is particularly malignant, and as it notoriously desires to be the echo of public opinion, its language is the more significant. From all I can learn, almost every person denounces what they are pleased to call the crime of American slavery, and ridicules the idea that we can be considered a free people whilst it shall exist. They know nothing of the nature and character of slavery in the United States, and have no desire to learn. Should any public opportunity offer, I am fully prepared to say my say upon this subject, as I have already done privately in high quarters."

The first hotel in the District of Columbia was

Suter's Tavern, a long, low wooden building in Georgetown, kept by John Suter. Next came the Union Hotel there, kept by Crawford. The National Hotel in Washington was for some years under the management of Mr. Gadsby, who had previously been




SUTER'S TAVERN (1791.)

a noted landlord in Alexandria, and what was afterward the Metropolitan Hotel was the Indian Queen, kept by the Browns, father and sons. Another hotel was built nearer the White House by Colonel John Tayloe, and was inherited by his son, Mr. B. Ogle

Tayloe. It was not, however, pecuniarily successful, as it was thought to be too far up-town. Mrs. Tayloe, who was born at the North, used to visit her childhood's home every summer, and in traveling on one of those floating palaces, the day-boats on the Hudson River, she was struck with the business energy and desire to please everybody manifested by the steward. On her return Colonel Tayloe mentioned the want of success which had attended his hotel, and she remarked that if he could get Mr. Willard, the steward of the

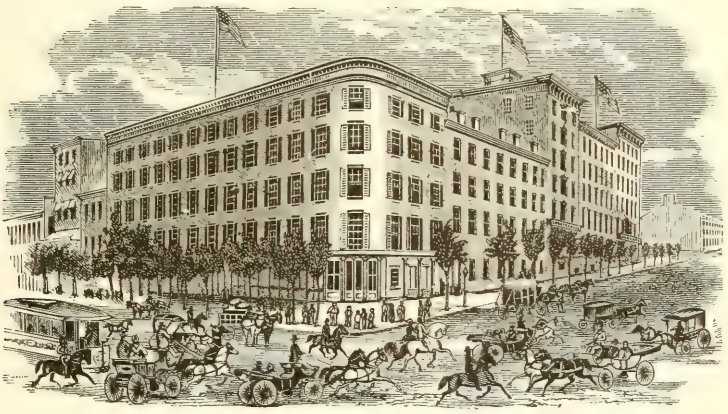


THE EBBITT HOUSE.

Albany steamer, as its landlord, there would be no fear as to its success. Mr. Tayloe wrote to Mr. Willard, a native of Westminster, Vermont, who came to Washington, and was soon, in connection with his brother, E. D. Willard, in charge of Mr. Tayloe's hotel, then called the City Hotel. The Willards gave to this establishment the same attention which had characterized their labors on board of the steamboat. They met their guests as they alighted from the stages in which they came to Washington. They stood at the head of

their dinner-tables, wearing white linen aprons, and carved the joints of meat, the turkeys, and the game. They were ever ready to courteously answer questions, and to do all in their power to make a sojourn at the City Hotel homelike and agreeable.

Success crowned these efforts to please the public, and the City Hotel soon took the first rank among the *caravanserais* of the national metropolis. Mr. E. D. Willard retired, and Mr. Henry A. Willard took into partnership with him Mr. Joseph C. Willard, while

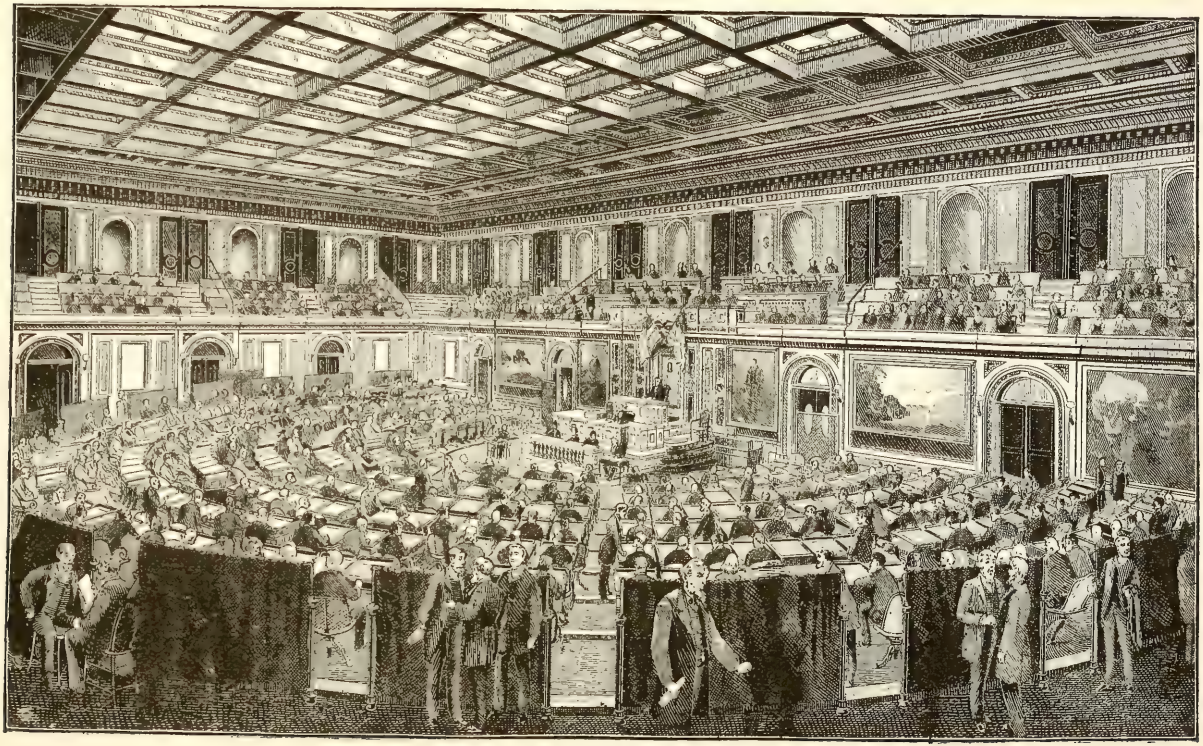


WILLARD'S HOTEL.

another brother, Mr. Caleb C. Willard, became the landlord of the popular Ebbitt House. In time it was determined to rebuild the hotel, which was done under the superintendence of Mr. Henry Willard, who was designed by nature for an architect. When the house was completed it was decided that it should be called thenceforth Willard's Hotel, and about one hundred gentlemen were invited to a banquet given at its opening. After the cloth was removed, the health of the Messrs. Willard was proposed as the first toast, and

then Mr. Edward Everett was requested to make a reply. He spoke with his accustomed ease, saying that there are occasions when deeds speak louder than words, and this was one of them. Instead of Mr. Willard returning thanks to the company present, it was the company that was under obligations to him. In fact, he thought that in paying their respects to Mr. Willard, they were but doing a duty, though certainly a duty most easily performed. "There are few duties in life," said Mr. Everett, "that require less nerve than to come together and eat a good dinner. There is very little self-denial in that. Indeed, self-denial is not the principle which generally carries us to a hotel, although it sometimes happens that we have to practice it while there." Mr. Everett went on to say that under the roof which sheltered them he had passed a winter with John Quincy Adams, Chief Justice Marshall, Judge Story, Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Clay, and Mr. Webster. These were all gone, but with them he could name another then living, and not unworthy to be associated with them, Washington Irving. "Think of men like these gathered together at the same time around the festive board under this roof! That was, indeed, the feast of reason, not merely the flash of merriment, which set the table in a roar, but that gushing out of convivial eloquence; that cheerful interchange of friendly feeling in which the politician and the partisan are forgotten. Yes, gentlemen," Mr. Everett went on to say, "there were giants in those days; giants in intellect, but in character and spirit they were gentlemen, and in their familiar intercourse with each other they had all the tenderness of brethren.'

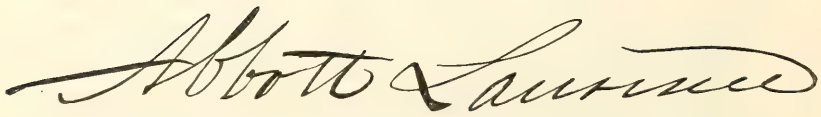
The new hall of the House of Representatives was finished about this time. It was throughout



NEW HALL OF REPRESENTATIVES.

gayly decorated, and its ceiling glittered with gilding, but it was walled in from all direct communication with fresh air and sunlight. Captain Meigs, of the Engineer Corps, who had been intrusted by Secretary Davis with the erection of the wings, had added to the architect's plans an encircling row of committee-rooms and clerical offices. Instead of ventilating the hall by windows, a system was adopted patterned after that tried in the English House of Commons, of pumping in air heated in the winter and cooled in the summer, and Captain Meigs had thermometers made, each one bearing his name and rank, in which the mercury could only ascend to ninety degrees and only fall to twenty-four degrees above zero. He thought that by his system of artificial ventilation it would never be hotter or colder than their limits; but he was wofully mistaken, and immense sums have since been expended in endeavoring to remedy the deficient ventilation. The acoustic properties of the new hall were superior to those of the classic and grand old hall, but with that exception, the gaudily embellished new hall was less convenient, not so well lighted and ventilated, and far inferior in dignified appearance to the old one.

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ABBOTT LAWRENCE was born at Groton, Massachusetts, December 16th, 1792; was a Representative in Congress from Massachusetts, 1835–1837, and 1839–1840; was Minister to Great Britain, 1849.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### THE NORTHERN CHAMPIONS.

FESSENDEN, OF MAINE—THE STIRLING CLAIM—SOCIAL FESTIVITIES—MARRIAGE OF JUDGE DOUGLAS—CONGRESSIONAL SCENES—SECRETARY OF WAR DAVIS—ART AND LITERATURE—GEORGE W. CHILDS—J. R. BARTLETT.

THE entrance of William Pitt Fessenden into the Senate Chamber was graphically sketched years afterward by Charles Sumner. "He came," said the Senator from Massachusetts, "in the midst of that terrible debate on the Kansas and Nebraska bill, by which the country was convulsed to its centre, and his arrival had the effect of a reinforcement on a field of battle. Those who stood for freedom then were few in numbers—not more than fourteen—while thirty-seven Senators in solid column voted to break the faith originally plighted to freedom, and to overturn a time-honored landmark, opening that vast Mesopotamian region to the curse of slavery. Those anxious days are with difficulty comprehended by a Senate where freedom rules. One more in our small number was a sensible addition. We were no longer fourteen, but fifteen. His reputation at the bar, and his fame in the other House, gave assurance which was promptly sustained. He did not wait, but at once entered into the debate with all those resources which afterward became so famous. The scene that ensued exhibited his readiness and courage. While saying

that the people of the North were fatigued with the threat of disunion, that they considered it as 'mere noise and nothing else,' he was interrupted by Mr. Butler, of South Carolina, always ready to speak for slavery, exclaiming, 'If such sentiments as yours prevail I want a dissolution right away'—a characteristic intrusion doubly out of order. To which the newcomer rejoined, 'Do not delay it on my account; do not delay it on account of anybody at the North.' The effect was electric; but this incident was not alone. Douglas, Cass, and Butler interrupted only to be worsted by one who had just ridden into the lists. The feelings on the other side were expressed by the Senator from South Carolina, who, after one of the flashes of debate which he had provoked, exclaimed: 'Very well, go on; I have no hope of you!' All this will be found in the *Globe* precisely as I give it, but the *Globe* could not picture the exciting scene—the Senator from Maine, erect, firm, immovable as a jutting promontory, against which the waves of ocean tossed and broke in dissolving spray. There he stood. Not a Senator, loving freedom, who did not feel on that day that a champion had come."



WILLIAM PITT FESSENDEN.

A most extraordinary claim was presented at Wash-

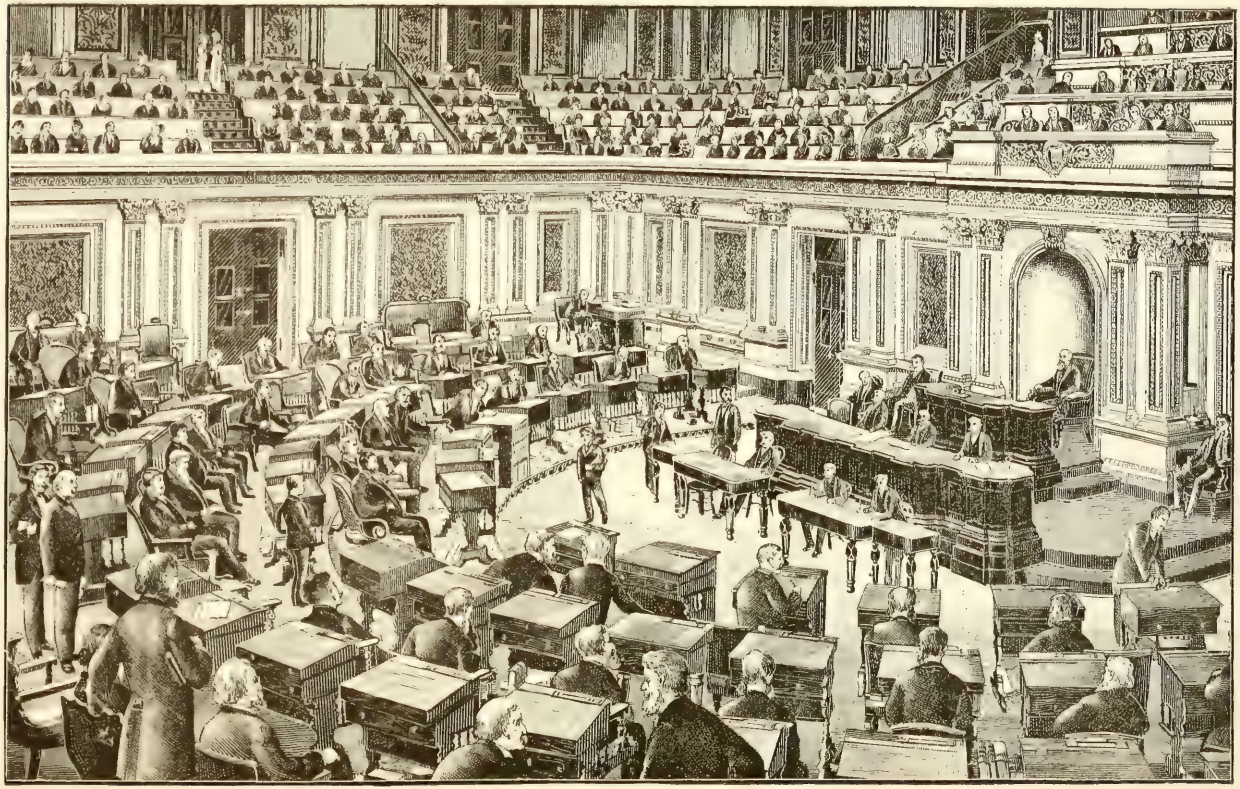
ington during the Pierce Administration by Mr. Francis B. Hayes, a respectable attorney, who had Reverdy Johnson as his legal adviser. It was from the heirs of Sir William Alexander, the Earl of Stirling, who was regarded as the most brilliant man in the courts of James VI. and of Charles I. He received from these monarchs grants of an immense domain in North America, including, in addition to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward's Island, and Canada, a considerable portion of Maine, Michigan, and Wisconsin, together with a strip of land reaching from the headwaters of Lake Superior to the Gulf of California, and "the lands and bounds adjacent to the said Gulf on the west and south, whether they be found a part of the continent or mainland, or an island," as it was thought they were, which was commonly called and distinguished by the name of California.

The immensity of this land-claim was sufficient to defeat it, and it was asserted that the claimant, whose father had established his title to the Earldom of Stirling in the Scotch courts, was a pretender, and that the most important papers substantiating the claim were forgeries. Just then there appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* an elaborate article of more than sixty pages, showing up the worthlessness of the claim, and the *North American Review* published a reply, in which it said: "If the present claimant is indeed (as we believe him to be) the legal representative of the first Earl, there can be no doubt that he is, morally speaking, entitled to the principal and interest of the debt secured by royal bond to his ancestor, and that it would not be unworthy the magnanimity of both the British Government and our own to tender him some honorable consideration for the entire loss to his family, through the

fortunes of war, of revenue and benefit from the *bona fide* and, for the times, immense outlay of his ancestor in the colonization of the Western wilderness." No capitalists were found, however, who were willing to advance the funds for the prosecution of the claim, and Lord Stirling finally accepted a department clerkship, which he creditably filled.

The last winter of President Pierce's Administration was a very gay one at Washington. In addition to the official and public entertainments at the White House, Secretaries McClelland and Davis, and several of the foreign Ministers, gave elegant evening parties, the Southern element predominating in them. Senator Seward and Speaker Banks also gave evening receptions, and the leading Republicans generally congregated at the pleasant evening tea-parties at the residence of Mr. Bailey, the editor of the *Era*, where Miss Dodge, afterward known in literature as "Gail Hamilton," enlivened the cozy parlors with her sparkling conversation.

The wedding of Judge Douglas was a social event. His first wife had been Miss Martin, a North Carolina lady, who was the mother of his two young sons, who inherited from her a plantation which had belonged to her father in Lawrence County, Mississippi, on which there were upward of a hundred slaves. The "Little Giant's" second wife was Miss Ada Cutts, a Washington belle, the daughter of Richard Cutts, who was for twelve years a Representative from Maine when it was a district of Massachusetts, and afterward Comptroller of the Treasury. Miss Cutts was tall, very beautiful, and well qualified by education and deportment to advance her husband's political interests. She was a devout Roman Catholic, and they were married in a



NEW SENATE CHAMBER.

Roman Catholic Church, where the bridegroom did not seem at home. She had no children, and after having been for some years a widow, she was married a second time to Colonel Williams, of the Adjutant General's Department of the Army.

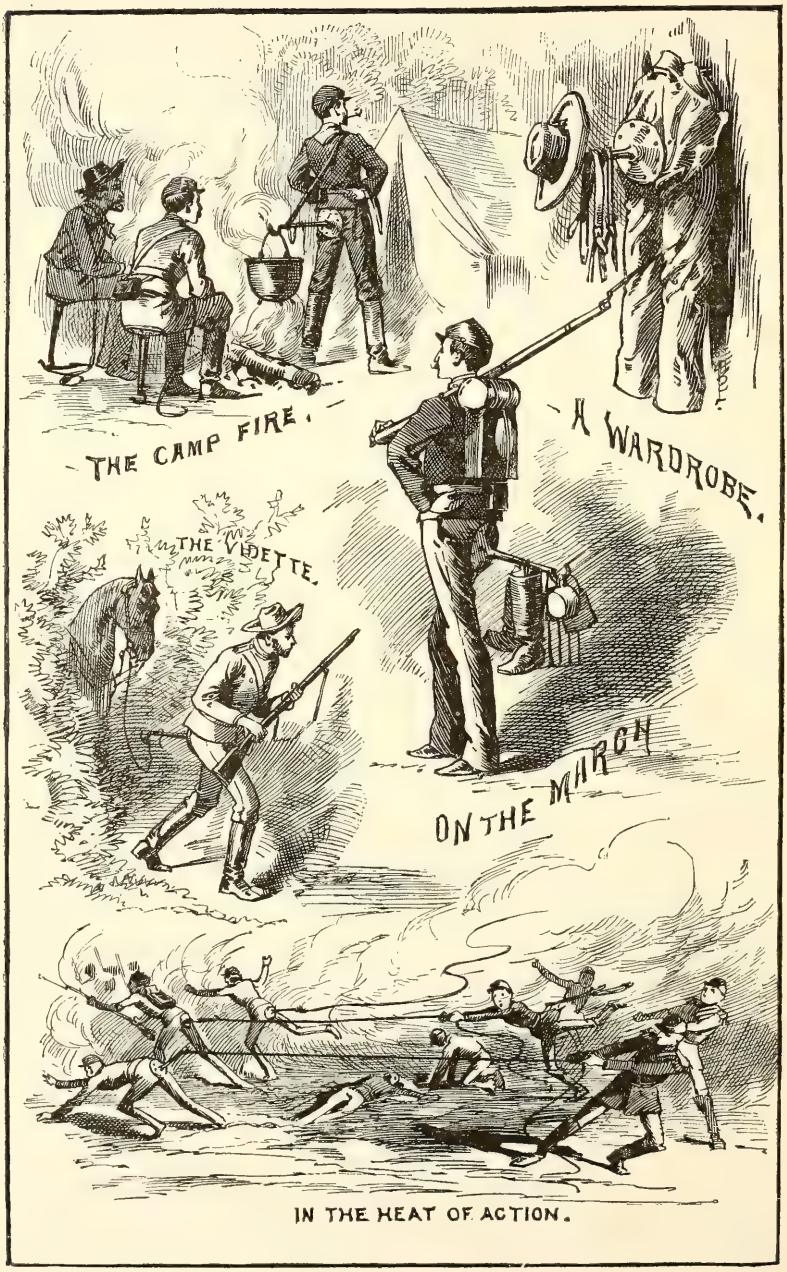
The last session under the Pierce Administration was a stormy one. Vice-President Breckinridge delivered an eloquent address when the Senate removed into its new chamber, which was followed by angry debates on the tariff, the Pacific Railroad, the fish bounties, the admission of Minnesota, and the submarine telegraph to England.

In the House Mr. Banks won laurels as Speaker, displaying a thorough acquaintance with the intricacies of parliamentary rules and prompt action in those cases when excited Representatives sought to set precedence at defiance. There was an investigation into a charge of bribery and corruption, made by Mr. Simonton, the correspondent of the New York *Times*, and he was kept in the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms for not giving the facts upon which he had based his charges. It was evident to all, however, that Mr. Simonton was correct when he stated that "a corrupt organization of Congressmen and certain lobby-agents existed."

With the exception of a few favored ones, the officers of the army were glad when the termination of the term of service of Colonel Jefferson Davis as Secretary of War approached. He had acted as though he was Commander-in-Chief, treating the heads of bureaus as if they were his orderlies, and directing everything, from a review down to the purchase of shoe-blacking. He also changed the patterns of uniforms, arms, and equipments several times, and it was after one of these

changes that he received a communication from Lieutenant Derby, well known in literary circles as John Phœnix, suggesting that each private have a stout iron hook projecting from a round plate, to be strongly sewed on the rear of his trousers. Illustrations showed the uses to which this hook could be put. In one, a soldier was shown on the march, carrying his effects suspended from this hook; in another, a row of men were hung by their hooks on a fence, fast asleep; in a third, a company was shown advancing in line of battle, each man having a rope attached to his hook, the other end of which was held by an officer in the rear, who could restrain him if he advanced too rapidly, or haul him back if he was wounded. When Secretary Davis received this he was in a towering rage, and he announced that day at a Cabinet meeting that he intended to have Lieutenant Derby tried before a court-martial "organized to convict" and summarily dismissed. But the other Secretaries, who enjoyed the joke, convinced him that if the affair became public he would be laughed at, and he abandoned the prosecution of the daring artist-author.

Mr. Healy came to Washington in the last winter of the Pierce Administration, and painted several capital portraits. Mr. Ames, of Boston, who exhibited a life-like portrait of Daniel Webster, and Mr. Powell also set up their easels, to execute orders. Captain Eastman, of the army, was at work on the sketches for the illustrations of Schoolcraft's great work on the Indians, and Mr. Charles Lanman, the author-artist, added to his already well-filled portfolios of landscapes. Mr. George West, known to fame as a painter of Chinese life, was engaged by Captain Meigs to paint prominent naval events in spaces in the elaborate frescoing on the




DERBY'S PLATE AND HOOK ATTACHMENT.

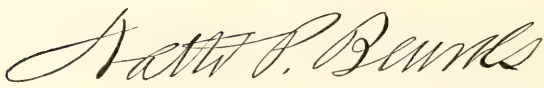
walls of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, but after he had completed two he refused to submit to the military rule of Meigs, and stopped work. What he had done was then painted out. An Italian fresco-painter, Mr. Brimidi, was more obedient to orders and willing to answer the roll-calls, so he was permitted to cover the interior walls of the new Capitol with his work—allegorical, historical, diabolical, and mythological.

President Pierce was the most popular man personally that ever occupied the Presidential chair. When, in 1855, the Orange and Alexandria Railroad was completed to Culpepper Court-House, Virginia, John S. Barbour, president of the road, invited a number of gentlemen to inspect it and partake of a barbecue. President Pierce, Mr. Bodisco, the Russian Minister, and other distinguished officials were of the invited guests. The party went to Alexandria by steamer, and on landing there found a train awaiting them, with a baggage-car fitted up as a lunch room. The President was in excellent spirits, and when the excursionists reached the place where the barbecue was held, he enjoyed a succession of anecdotes told by the best story tellers of the party. The feast of barbecued meats was afterward enjoyed, and early in the afternoon the party again took the cars to return. On the return trip a gentleman with an enormous beard, having imbibed very freely, leaned his head on the back of the seat and went to sleep. A blind boy got in at one of the stations, and moving along the aisle of the car, his hand came in contact with the man's beard, which he mistook for a lap-dog, and began to pat, saying, "Pretty puppy, pretty puppy." This attention disturbed the sleeper, who gave a loud snort, when the boy jumped

back, and said, "You wouldn't bite a blind boy, would you?" President Pierce was much amused with this occurrence, and often spoke of it when he met those who had witnessed it with him.

Mr. George W. Childs, then a courteous and genial book publisher in Philadelphia, endeavored to obtain from Congress an order for an edition of Dr. Kane's work on the Arctic regions. The House passed the requisite resolution, but the Senate refused to concur, although it had ordered the publication of several expensive accounts of explorations at the far West. The Congressional *imprimatur* was also refused to the report of the Hon. J. R. Bartlett, who was the civilian member of the Joint Commission which had established the new boundary between the United States and Mexico. He had refused to bow down and worship the "brass coats and blue buttons" of his military associates, so his valuable labors were ignored, while an enormous sum was expended in illustrating and publishing the work of Major Emory, the ranking army officer on the Commission.

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NATHANIEL PRENTISS BANKS was born at Waltham, Massachusetts, January 30th, 1816; was a Representative in Congress, December 5th, 1853, to December 4th, 1857, when he resigned, having served as Speaker in the Thirty-fourth Congress; was Governor of Massachusetts, January, 1858, to January, 1861; served throughout the war as major-general of volunteers; was a Representative in Congress, December 4th, 1865, to March 3d, 1873, and again December 6th, 1875, to March 3d, 1877; was appointed United States Marshal for the district of Massachusetts.

## CHAPTER XL.

### EXCITING PRESIDENTIAL CONTEST.

DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR THE PRESIDENCY—JAMES BUCHANAN—STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS—DELEGATES TO THE CINCINNATI CONVENTION—THE STRUGGLE—THE DISORGANIZED DEMOCRACY UNITED—OPPOSITION NOMINATIONS—THE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION—ELECTION OF MR. BUCHANAN—COUNTING THE VOTES.

AS the time for the Presidential election of 1856 approached, the Democrats, thoroughly alarmed by the situation, determined to make a last struggle for Southern supremacy, and Washington was agitated by the friends of the prominent candidates for the Democratic nomination for months before the National Convention at Cincinnati.

President Pierce earnestly desired a renomination, and had distributed "executive patronage" over the country in a way which he hoped would secure him a majority of the delegates. He had done all in his power to promote the interests of the South, but success had not crowned his efforts, and he was ungratefully dropped, as Daniel Webster had been before him.

James Buchanan, then in the sixty-fifth year of his age, had started in public life as a Federalist, and in 1819 had united in a call for a public meeting to protest against the admission of Missouri as a slave State. But he had become converted to pro-slavery Democracy, and although he had been defeated three times in Democratic Conventions as a candidate for the

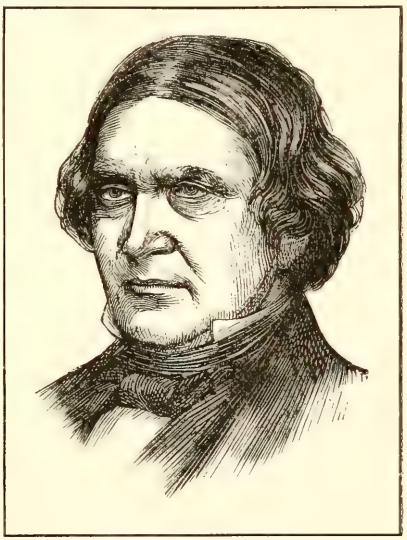
Presidential nomination, he was regarded as the most "available" candidate by those who had been in past years identified with the Whigs. His political views are summed up in the following extract from one of his speeches in Congress: "If I know myself, I am a politician neither of the West nor the East, of the North nor of the South. I therefore shall forever avoid any expressions the direct tendency of which must be to create sectional jealousies, and at length disunion—that worst of all political calamities." That he endeavored in his future career to act in accordance with this uncertain policy no candid mind can doubt.

Stephen A. Douglas' doctrine of "squatter sovereignty" was repudiated by the Southern Democrats with but few exceptions. Bold, dashing, and energetic in all that he undertook, with almost superhuman powers of physical endurance, he even forced the admiration of men who did not agree with his opinions. No man ever lived in this country who could go before the masses "on the stump," and produce such a marked effect, and his personal magnetism won him many friends. One day the "Little Giant," going up to Beverly Tucker, a prominent Virginia politician, threw his arm upon his shoulder, and said, in his impulsive way, "Bev., old boy, I love you." "Douglas," says Tucker, "will you *always* love me?" "Yes," says Douglas, "I will." "But," persisted Tucker, "will you love me when you get to be President?" "If I don't, may I be blanked!" says Douglas. "What do you want me to do for you?" "Well," says Tucker, "when you get to be President, all I want you to do for me is to pick some public place, and put your arm around my neck, just as you are doing now, and *call*

*me Bev.!*" Douglas was much amused, and used to relate the circumstance with great glee.

General Cass had a few faithful friends, and Henry A. Wise, of Virginia, who was a blatant Buchanan man, was not without hope that he himself might receive the nomination.

Many of the delegates to the Cincinnati Convention passed some time in Washington City. Massachusetts sent Charles Gordon Greene, the veteran editor of the Boston *Post;* Benjamin F. Butler, then known as a smart Lowell lawyer, and the old anti-Mason, Ben. F. Hallet, then United States District Attorney. Among the Kentuckians were the gallant John C. Brekinridge, the pugnacious Charles A. Wickliffe, J. W. Stevenson, and T. C. McCreery, afterward Governors and Senators, and the courteous William C. Preston, afterward Minister to Spain. From Louisiana were Senators Slidell and Benjamin, prominently connected with the Rebellion a few years later, and Pierre Soulé. Florida was to be represented by Senator Yulee, of Israelitish extraction, who in early life spelled his name L-e-v-i. Then there were Vallandigham, of Ohio; Captain Isaiah Rynders, of New York; James S. Green, of Missouri; James A. Bayard, of Delaware,



JAMES A. BAYARD

and other party magnates, who all expressed their desire to sink all personal grievances to secure victory.

The Democrats met in Convention at Cincinnati, where the friends of each candidate had their headquarters, that of Mr. Douglas being graced by Dan Sickles, Tom Hyer, Isaiah Rynders, and other New York politicians, while at a private house leased by Mr. S. M. Barlow, the claims of Buchanan were urged by Senators Bayard, Benjamin, Bright, and Slidell. General Pierce had few friends beyond the holders of Federal offices, and General Cass received a cold support from a half-dozen old friends.

The first two days were occupied in settling the claims of contestants to seats. The anti-Benton delegates from Missouri were admitted, and the New York wrangle was finally settled by adopting the minority report of the Committee on Credentials, which admitted both the "Hards" and the "Softs," giving each half a vote. On the first ballot, Buchanan had one hundred and thirty-five votes, Pierce one hundred and twenty-three, Douglas thirty-three, and Cass five. The balloting was continued during four days, when, on the sixteenth ballot (the name of Pierce having been withdrawn), Buchanan received one hundred and sixty-eight votes, Douglas one hundred and twenty-one, and Cass four and a half. Mr. Richardson, of Illinois, then withdrew the name of Mr. Douglas, and Mr. Buchanan was unanimously nominated. The Convention then balloted for a candidate for Vice-President, and on the second ballot John C. Breckinridge was nominated.

The Native Americans and the Republicans flattered themselves that the Democratic party had been reduced to a mere association of men, whose only aim was the spoils of victory. Indeed, Mr. Lewis D. Campbell, of

Ohio, asserted in a public speech that "were President Pierce to send out all his force of marshals and deputy marshals to find such a party, each one provided with a national search-warrant, they would fail to discover the fugitive! It, too, has departed! His marshals would have to make returns upon their writs similar to that of the Kentucky constable. A Kentucky fight once occurred at a tavern on 'Bar Grass!' One of the combatants broke a whisky bottle over the head of his antagonist. The result was a State's warrant. The defendant fled through a corn-field, over the creek, into a swamp, and there climbed a stump. Seating himself in the fork, he drew his 'bowie,' and as the constable approached in pursuit, he addressed him:

"'Now, Mr. Constable, you want to take me, and I give you fair warning that if you attempt to climb this stump, by the Eternal! I'll take you!' The constable, who had been about the court-house enough to learn some of the technical terms used in returning writs, went back to the 'Squire's office, and indorsed upon the warrant: 'Non est inventus! through fieldibus, across creekum, in swampum, up stumpum, non comeatibus!' So it is with the old Jackson Democratic party—'non comeatibus!'"

The Democratic party, however, was in a better condition than its opponents imagined. President Pierce entered heartily into the campaign, Jefferson Davis and Stephen A. Douglas worked shoulder to shoulder, and Mr. Buchanan proved to be a model candidate. When his old friend, Mr. Nahum Capen, of Boston, sent to him a campaign life for his indorsement he declined, saying: "After reflection and consultation, I stated in my letter of acceptance substantially that I would make no issues beyond the platform, and have,

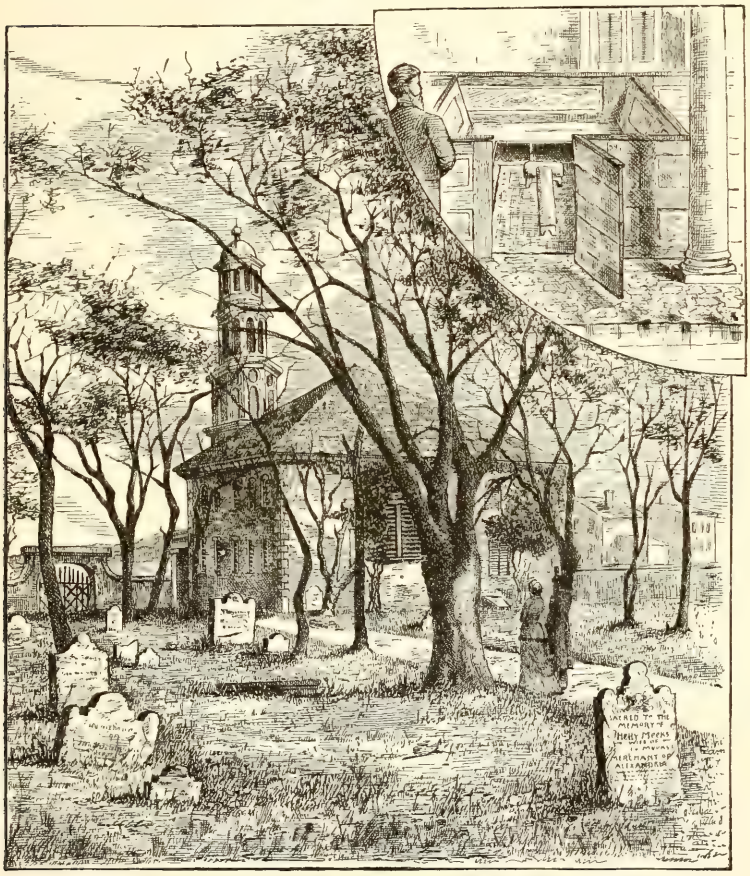
therefore, avoided giving my sanction to any publication containing opinions with which I might be identified, and prove unsatisfactory to some portions of the Union. I must continue to stand on this ground."

The Governors of the Southern States were satisfied with the nomination of Mr. Buchanan, although the leading secessionists avowed their intention to avail themselves of the opportunity for organizing a rebellion which they hoped would prove a revolution. Officers of the army and navy, born at the South, or who had married Southern wives, were appealed to to stand by the States to which they first owed allegiance, and accessions to those willing to desert the Union when their States called for their services were announced. Prominent among those officers who intimated their intention to serve Virginia rather than the Federal Government was Colonel Robert E. Lee. A Virginian by birth, he had married the only child of George Washington Parke Custis, and when not on duty away from Washington he resided at "Arlington." On Sundays he worshiped in Christ Church, at Alexandria, occupying the family pew in which George Washington used to sit.

The National American Convention had met at Philadelphia on the 19th of February, and (after an exciting discussion of the slavery question, followed by the withdrawal of the Abolitionists) nominated Fillmore and Donelson. This ticket was adopted at an eminently respectable convention of the Whig leaders, then without followers, held at Baltimore on the 17th of September.

Some of Mr. Seward's friends desired to have him nominated by the Republicans at their National Convention, to be held at Philadelphia on the 17th of June,

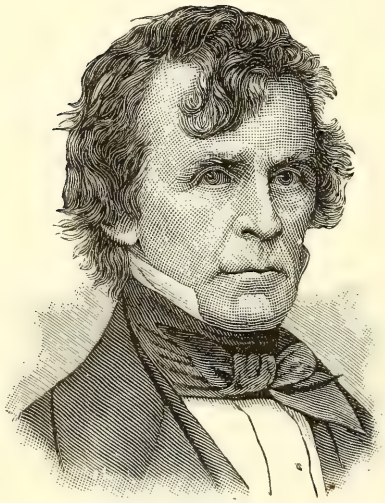
but Thurlow Weed saw that he could not receive as many votes as were cast for Scott in 1852, and advocated the nomination of John C. Fremont, the "Path-



CHRIST CHURCH AT ALEXANDRIA, AND WASHINGTON'S PEW.

finder," whose young and pretty daughter might be seen every pleasant afternoon riding on horseback on Pennsylvania Avenue with her old grandfather, Colonel Thomas H. Benton. "Old Blair, of the *Globe*,"

and his two sons, Preston King, of New York, John Van Buren, and David Wilmot, with other distinguished and disgruntled Democrats, with several clever young journalists, created a great enthusiasm for Colonel Fremont. Mr. Bailey, of the Washington *Era*, with a few old Whigs, advocated the nomination of Judge McLean, while Burlingame, at the head of the "Young America," or Know Nothing branch of the party, endeavored to get up enthusiasm for Mr. Speaker Banks, "the bobbin-boy."



ISAAC TOUCEY

When the Republican Convention met there were self-styled delegates from Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, and Virginia, but it was, in fact, a convention of nearly a thousand delegates from the free States. An informal ballot showed that Fremont had a large majority and he was unanimously nominated. Mr. Dayton, of New Jersey, was nominated as Vice-President, defeating Nathaniel P. Banks, Abraham Lincoln, Charles Sumner, and David Wilmot.

The Republicans endeavored to revive the excitements of the Log Cabin campaign, and a considerable zeal was manifested by the Americans, the Democrats, and the Whigs, but Mr. Buchanan received the electoral votes of five large free States, and of every South-

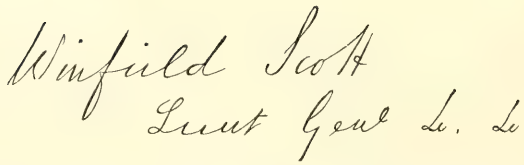
ern State with the exception of Maryland, which gave its vote for Mr. Fillmore. Colonel Fremont received the vote of every Northern State with the exception of California, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Mr. Buchanan was astonished at the large vote which he had received, and he regarded this as a proof that what he called "Abolition fanaticism" had at last been checked.

The electoral votes for President and Vice-President were counted, in accordance with the established custom, in the Hall of the House of Representatives. The Senators went there in procession, advanced up the middle aisle, and took seats provided for them in the area in front of the Speaker's chair, the Representatives receiving them "standing and in silence." Mr. Speaker Banks handed his "gavel" to Judge Mason, President of the Senate *pro tempore*, and the venerable old fogies took arm-chairs in the area before the table. Senator Bigler, of Pennsylvania, with Messrs. Jones, of Tennessee, and Howard, of Ohio, duly appointed tellers, then took possession of the clerk's desk, and the proceedings commenced. State by State, the Chairman took the packages, broke the seals, and handed the documents to the tellers, by one of whom they were read. Maine led off with "Fremont and Dayton," and for awhile it was all that way. But the Pathfinder stuck in the sands of New Jersey, and then "Old Buck" began to make a showing, varied by the Maryland vote for Millard Fillmore. Everything went along "beautiful," and the vote had been announced by the tellers, when objection was made to the vote of Wisconsin, which was one day late, owing to a snow storm.

A regular scene of confusion ensued, in which their high mightinesses, the Senators, became intensely

aroused. The great Michigander growled like an angry bear, and old Judge Butler became terribly excited, his long hair standing out in every direction, like that of a doll charged with electric fluid. At last he led the van, and the Senators withdrew in great dudgeon, to cool off as they passed through the Rotunda. In due time they returned, however, and after a little talk the vote was officially announced. The Senate then retired, the House adjourned, and the country turned its expectant eyes toward the coming Administration.

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WINFIELD SCOTT was born at Petersburg, Virginia, June 13th, 1786; received a liberal education; was admitted to the bar and practiced a few years; entered the army in 1808 as a captain of light artillery; commanded on the northern frontier and won the battle of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane in 1814; defeated Black Hawk in 1812; commanded in the Mexican campaign, which resulted in the capture of the City of Mexico in September, 1847; was defeated as the Whig candidate for President in 1852; was commissioned as Lieutenant-General in 1855, and died at New York, May 29th, 1866.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### MISS LANE IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

PRESIDENT-ELECT BUCHANAN—MISS HARRIET LANE—THE NEW CABINET AND THE MESSAGE—THE NEWSPAPER ORGANS—INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT BUCHANAN—THE INAUGURATION BALL—THE DRED SCOTT DECISION—THE MINORITY DECISION.

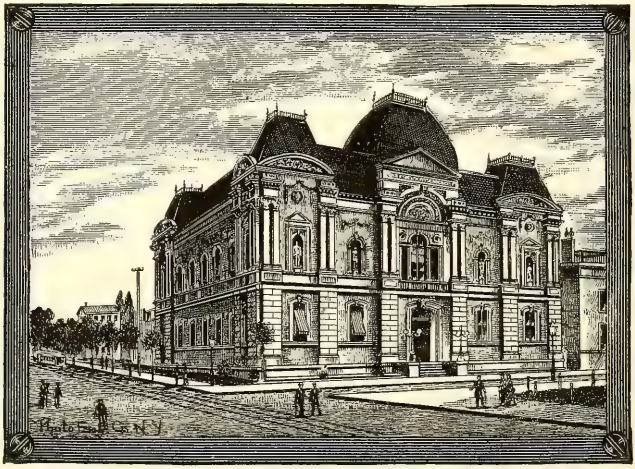
AFTER the election of Mr. Buchanan, his home at Lancaster, "Wheatland," was a political Mecca, to which leading Democrats from all sections made pilgrimages. Mr. Buchanan, who was experienced in public affairs, appointed his nephew, Mr. J. Buchanan Henry, a well-informed young gentleman, recently admitted to the Philadelphia bar, as his private secretary, and made him indorse brief statements of their contents on each of the numerous letters of recommendation for office which he received.

A few weeks before his inauguration, Mr. Buchanan visited Washington, that he might confer with his leading political friends. He entertained a large party of them at dinner at the National Hotel, after which nearly all of those present suffered from the effects of poison taken into their systems from an impure water supply, and some of them never recovered.

Mr. Buchanan was accompanied, when he left his home to be inaugurated, by Miss Harriet Lane, his niece, a graceful blonde with auburn hair and violet eyes, who had passed a season in London when her uncle was the American Minister there, and who was

as discreet as she was handsome, amiable, and agreeable. With her, to aid in keeping house in the Executive Mansion, was "Miss Hetty" Parker, who had for years presided over Mr. Buchanan's bachelor's-hall, and his private secretary, Mr. J. Buchanan Henry.

On his arrival at Washington, Mr. Buchanan was taken to a suite of rooms prepared for him at the National Hotel, but he soon after went to the house



THE CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART.

of Mr. W. W. Corcoran, the generous founder of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, where he remained until his inauguration. On the morning after his arrival, the *National Intelligencer* gave the following as the probable composition of his Cabinet: Secretary of State, Lewis Cass, of Michigan; Secretary of the Treasury, Howell Cobb, of Georgia; Secretary of War, John B. Floyd, of Virginia; Secretary of the Navy, Aaron V. Brown, of Tennessee; Secretary of the Interior, J. Thompson, of Mississippi; Postmaster-General, J.

Glancy Jones, of Pennsylvania; Attorney-General, Isaac Toucey, of Connecticut. It was also said that Mr. Jones had declined, and that the position of Postmaster-General had been tendered to W. C. Alexander, of New Jersey. This programme, arranged by Mr. Buchanan before he had left his home, was but slightly changed. Mr. Toucey was made Secretary of the Navy, Aaron V. Brown, Postmaster-General, and Jere Black was brought in as Attorney-General. But these



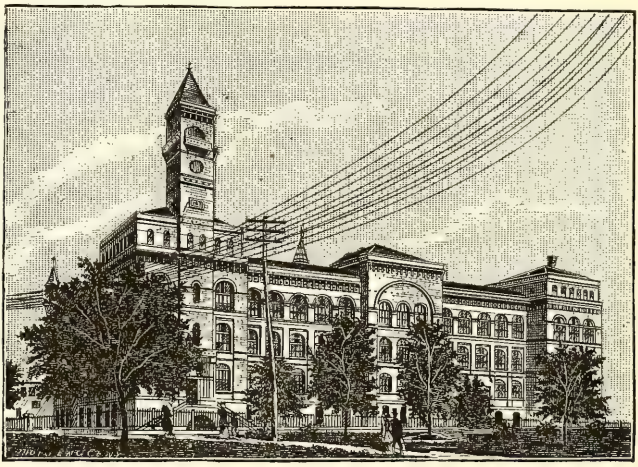
PATENT OFFICE AND INTERIOR DEPARTMENT.

carefully made arrangements failed to beget confidence. Republicans were defiant, as were men of the dominant party, and everywhere were apprehensions.

The inaugural message had been written at Wheatland, where Mr. J. Buchanan Henry had copied Mr. Buchanan's drafts and re-copied them with alterations and amendments, until the document was satisfactory. It met the approval of the selected Cabinet when read to them at Washington, the only change being the in-

sertion of a clause shadowing the forthcoming Dred Scott decision by the Supreme Court as one that would dispose of a vexed and troublesome topic by the highest authority.

It was also arranged that Mr. Buchanan's friend, Mr. John Appleton, who had represented the Portland district in Congress, and had served as Minister to Bolivia and as Secretary of Legation at Paris, should edit the Washington *Union*, which was to be the "organ"



BUREAU OF ENGRAVING AND PRINTING BUILDING.

of the new Administration. Mr. Appleton's salary, with the other expenses of the paper above its receipts, were to be paid by Mr. Cornelius Wendell, as a consideration for the printing and binding for the Executive Departments.

Major Heiss, who had made sixty thousand dollars on the public printing, and then lost forty thousand dollars in publishing the New Orleans *Delta*, established a paper called *The States*, which was to be the organ of the filibusters and the secessionists. He was

aided by Major Harris, a son-in-law of General Armstrong, who had made his fortune while Senate Printer, other parties doing the work for about half of what was paid for it. Mr. Henri Watterson, who had been born at Washington, while his father represented a Tennessee district in the House, commenced his brilliant editorial career as a reporter on *The States.*

At midnight on the third of March, the fine band of P. S. Gilmore, which had accompanied the Charlestown City Guard to Washington, formed in front of Mr. Corcoran's house, beneath the windows of the chamber occupied by Mr. Buchanan, and played "Hail to the Chief," followed by the "Star Spangled Banner" and "Hail Columbia." The city was filled that night with strangers, many of whom could not find sleeping-places. Every hotel was crammed, every boarding-house was crowded, private houses were full, and even the circus tent was turned into a dormitory at fifty cents a head.

Congress was in session all night, and the Capitol was crowded. Just prior to the final adjournment of the House, the newspaper correspondents, who had received many courtesies from Mr. Speaker Banks, united in writing him a letter of thanks. In his reply he said: "The industry and early intelligence which gave value to your labors are often the subject of commendation, and to this I am happy to add that, so far as I am able to judge, you have been guided as much by a desire to do justice to individuals as to promote the public weal."

The sun rose in a fog and was greeted by a salute from the Navy Yard and the Arsenal, while the rattling notes of the "reveille" were heard on all sides, and hundreds of large American flags were displayed from

public and private buildings. The streets were filled with soldiers, firemen, badge-bedecked politicians, and delighted negroes. Well-mounted staff officers and marshals galloped to and fro, directing military and civic organizations to their positions in the procession.



GENERAL QUITMAN.

The departments were closed, and the clerks were anxiously discussing the probability of a rotation in office which would force them to seek other employment.

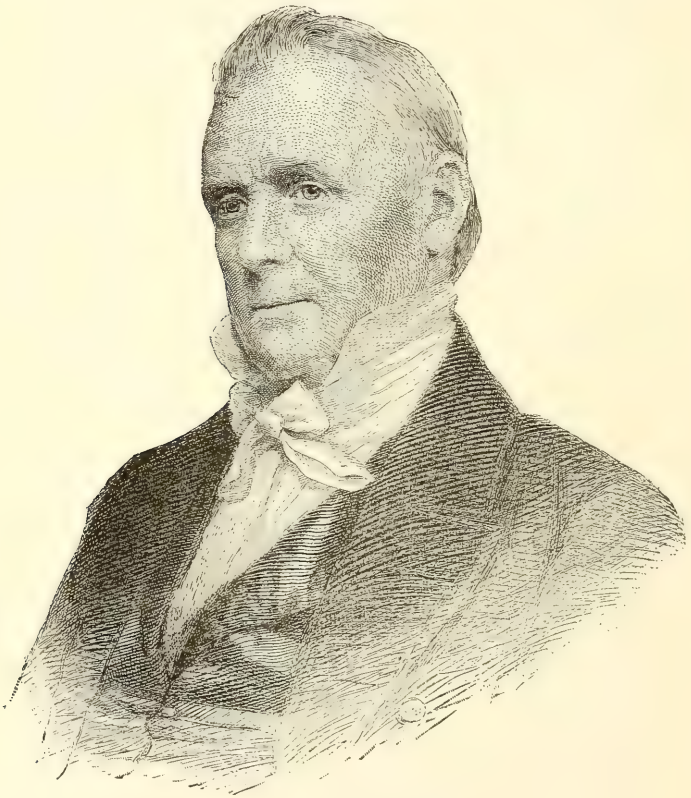
As noon approached, carriages conveyed the privi-

leged few to the Capitol, where, at "high twelve," the gallant and gifted John C. Breckinridge solemnly swore to protect and defend the Constitution. He then administered the same oath to Jefferson Davis and other new Senators.

Meanwhile that gallant Mexican War veteran, General Quitman, who commanded the military, had been formally received, and had given the word "March!" Colonel W. W. Selden, the Chief Marshal, had at least thirty gentlemen as aides, all finely mounted and handsomely attired, with uniform sashes and saddle-cloths, forming a gallant troop. At the head of the column was the Light Battery K, of the First Regular Artillery, commanded by Major William H. French. Next came a battalion of marines, headed by the full Marine Band, in their showy scarlet uniforms. Twenty-four companies of volunteer militia followed, prominent among them the Albany Burgess Corps, with Dodworth's Band; the Charlestown City Guard, with Gilmore's Band; the Lancaster Fencibles; the Willard Guard, from Auburn, New York; the Law Grays, and a German Rifle Company, from Baltimore.

Following the escort, in an open carriage drawn by two fine gray horses, sat President Pierce and President-elect Buchanan. Flowers were thrown into the carriage as it passed along, and cheers drowned the music of the bands. The carriage was followed by political clubs from New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Lancaster, each having its band and banners. The Washington Democratic Association had a decorated car, drawn by six horses, from which rose a liberty pole seventy feet high, carrying a large American flag. This and a full-rigged miniature ship-of-war were gotten up at the Washington Navy Yard.

On reaching the Capitol, Mr. Buchanan was escorted to the Senate Chamber. Mr. Breckinridge had been sworn in as Vice-President, and a procession was soon formed with him at its head, which moved to the plat-



JAMES BUCHANAN.

form erected in the usual place over the steps of the eastern portico. As he came out, dressed with his habitual precision in a suit of black, and towering above the surrounding throng, the thoughtful gravity of his features hushed the impatient crowd. There

was a second of intense quiet, then cheer after cheer rent the air. Soon he was surrounded by the magnates of the land, civil, military, and naval, with the Diplomatic Corps and a number of elegantly dressed ladies. Advancing to the front of the platform, he read his inaugural address from manuscript in a clear, distinct tone, and when he had concluded, reverentially took the oath of office, which, as with several of his predecessors, was administered by the venerable Chief Justice Taney. The cheers of the multitude were



MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE WHITE HOUSE IN 1857.

echoed by a President's salute, fired by the Light Artillery near by, and repeated at the Navy Yard and at the Arsenal. The procession was then re-formed and escorted the President to the White House, where he held an impromptu reception.

As there was no hall in Washington large enough to contain more than six hundred people, a temporary annex to the City Hall was erected by the managers of the Inauguration Ball. The interior was decorated with the flags of all nations, and the ceiling was of

white cloth, studded with golden stars, which twinkled as they were moved in unison with the measure of the dancers below, and reflected the blaze of light from large gas chandeliers.

Mr. Buchanan arrived about eleven o'clock, accompanied by Miss Lane, and was received by Major Magruder, who very discreetly spared him the infliction of a speech. Miss Lane wore a white dress trimmed with artificial flowers, similar to those which ornamented her hair, and clasping her throat was a necklace of many strands of sea pearls. She was escorted by Senator Jones and the venerable General Jessup, in full uniform.

The most beautiful among the many ladies present was the wife of Senator Douglas, who was dressed in bridal white, with a cluster of orange-blossoms on her classically formed head. Senators Cameron and Dixon, with their wives, were the only Republican members of the upper house present, but there was no lack of those from sunnier climes, with their ladies, among whom Mrs. Slidell, who was something of an oracle in political circles, was conspicuous. Mrs. Senator Thompson, of New Jersey, dressed in white, with silver ornaments, was much admired. The ladies of the Diplomatic Corps were elegantly attired, especially Madame de Sartiges, the wife of the French Minister. President Buchanan and suite were first admitted, with the Committee, to the supper-table. Dancing was kept up until daylight, and although the consumption of punch, wines, and liquors was great, there were no signs of intoxication.

Two days after Mr. Buchanan was inaugurated Chief Justice Taney, of the Supreme Court, gave a decision in the Dred Scott case, in which he virtually de-

clared that "negroes have no rights which white men are bound to respect." Dred Scott had been a slave in Missouri, belonging to Dr. Emerson, a surgeon in the United States Army, who had taken him, in the performance of his official duties, to Illinois, and thence to Minnesota. Returning with him to Missouri, Dred Scott was whipped, and claiming that he had secured his freedom by a residence in a free State and a free Territory, he brought suit for assault and battery. Meanwhile Dr. Emerson died, leaving to his widow and to his only daughter a considerable slave property, among them Dred Scott. Mrs. Emerson afterward married Dr. Calvin C. Chaffee, who came into Congress on the Know-Nothing wave and afterward became a Republican. The suit brought by Dred Scott was defended by the administrator of the Emerson estate, on behalf and with the consent of the wife of Dr. Chaffee and her daughter, who were the heirs-at-law. The final decision of the Supreme Court that Dred Scott was not a citizen of the United States and could not sue in the United States Court remanded him and his family to the chattelhood of Mrs. Chaffee. This decision was a great victory for the South, as it not only reduced all persons of African descent to a level with inanimate property, but asserted that a slave-holder could go to any part of the country, taking his slaves and preserving his ownership in them.

Mr. Justice B. R. Curtis, who had been appointed by President Fillmore on the recommendation of Daniel Webster, dissented. He furnished a copy of his dissenting opinion for publication in the newspapers, but the majority opinion was not forthcoming, and the clerk of the court said that the Chief Justice had forbidden its delivery. Shortly afterward, Judge Curtis,

having heard that extensive alterations had been made in the majority opinion, sent from Boston to Washington, being himself then in Massachusetts, for a copy. He was refused. A long and bitter correspondence ensued between him and Judge Taney. He claimed the right, which he undoubtedly possessed, to consult the record for the further discharge of his official duties. Judge Taney denied the right, and obtained an order of court forbidding anybody to see the opinion before its official publication in the Reports. The clerk of the court finally offered to supply manuscript copies of the decision at seven hundred and fifty dollars each, but the indefatigable Cornelius Wendell succeeded in obtaining a copy and printed a large edition in pamphlet form for gratuitous distribution.



John Buchanan Floyd was born in Montgomery County, Va., in 1805; was Governor of Virginia, 1850–1853; was Secretary of War under President Buchanan, 1857–1860; was a Confederate brigadier-general, 1861–1863; died at Abingdon, Va., August 26th, 1863.

## CHAPTER XLII.

### DIPLOMACY SOCIETY, AND CIVIL SERVICE.

FOREIGN RELATIONS—LORD NAPIER, THE BRITISH MINISTER—SIR WILLIAM GORE OUSELEY—SOCIETY IN WASHINGTON—A FASHIONABLE PRETENDER—CIVIL SERVICE—OFFICE SEEKING—CHOATE'S HANDWRITING—THE GOVERNORS OF KANSAS.

PRESIDENT BUCHANAN was virtually his own Secretary of State, although he had courteously placed his defeated rival, General Cass, at the head of the State Department. Nearly all of the important diplomatic correspondence, however, was dictated by Mr. Buchanan, who had, like Jefferson and John Quincy Adams, served as Secretary of State, and who was thoroughly versed in foreign relations. General Thomas, the Assistant Secretary of State, was soon dismissed, and Mr. John Appleton was persuaded to leave the editorial chair of the Washington *Union* and take his place.

The British Government, which had pleasant personal recollections of Mr. Buchanan, promptly sent Lord Napier as Minister Plenipotentiary, no successor to the dismissed Sir John Crampton having been accredited during the Administration of President Pierce. The new Minister was a Scotchman by birth, slender in figure, with light hair and blue eyes, and thoroughly trained in British diplomacy. He was an especial protégé of Lord Palmerston, and Lord Claren-

don had placed the olive-branch in his hand with his instructions. The press of England proclaimed that he had instructions to render himself acceptable to the Government and the people of the United States, and to do all in his power to promote kind feelings between the two countries. Soon after he landed at New York he made a speech at the annual dinner of the St. George's Society, in which he repudiated the previous distrustful and vexatious policy of the British Foreign Office toward the United States, and declared that the interests of the two countries were so completely identified that their policy should never be at variance.

The claim by Great Britain of the right to search vessels belonging to the United States which her naval officers might suspect to be slave-traders, and the establishment of a British protectorate over the Mosquito coast, in defiance of the Monroe Doctrine, were knotty questions. Lord Napier, evidently, was not capable of conducting the negotiations on them in a manner satisfactory to Lord Palmerston, who sent to Washington as his adviser Sir William Gore Ouseley, a veteran diplomat. He was not in any way accredited to the United States Government, but was named Special Minister to Central America, and stopped at Washington on his way there, renting the Madison House, on Lafayette Square, and entertaining with great liberality.

Sir William Gore Ouseley, who was a Knight Commander of the Bath, had resided at Washington as an attaché to the British Legation forty years previously, while Mr. Vaughan was Minister, and had then entered personally into a treaty of permanent peace and amity with the United States by marrying the daughter of Governor Van Ness, of Vermont. Miss Van

Ness was a young lady of great beauty, residing at the metropolis with her uncle, General Van Ness, at one time the Mayor of Washington. Sir William afterward visited Persia as the historian of the embassy of his uncle, Sir Gore Ouseley, and his published work contained much new information in relation to that then almost unknown portion of the world. He had afterward been connected with the British Legations in Spain, Brazil, and Buenos Ayres, and his acquaintance with the Spanish race, language, and literature was probably equal, if not superior, to that of any other Englishman. He was the author of a valuable work on the United States, and also of an expensive and illustrated volume on the scenery of Brazil.

It was doubtless due to considerations such as these, the special acquaintanceship of this veteran diplomat with the character, circumstances, and views of the several nationalities involved in the difficulties to be arranged, which had prevailed over mere political affinities and induced his selection by Lord Palmerston for the errand on which he came to Washington. His personal relations with Lord Napier were very friendly, and Mr. Buchanan was the friend of both, having known Lady Ouseley before her marriage. For some months the Ouseleys were prominent in Washington society. Lady Ouseley frequently had the honor of being escorted by the President in her afternoon walks, sometimes attended by her daughter, who wore the first crimson balmoral petticoat seen in Washington. When President Buchanan and Miss Lane took their summer flight for Bedford Springs, the Ouseleys were their traveling companions, sharing their private table, and their entertainments at Washington were numerous and expensive.

At one of these, Lady Ouseley wore a rich, blue brocade trimmed with Honiton lace, with a wreath of blue flowers upon her hair, fastened at each side by a diamond brooch; Miss Lane, the President's niece, wore a dress of black tulle, ornamented with bunches of gold leaves, and a head-dress of gold grapes; Miss Cass, the stately daughter of the Premier of the Administration, was magnificently attired in pearl-colored silk, with point-lace flounces, but wore no jewelry of any kind; Mrs. Brown, the wife of the Postmaster-General, wore a rich pink silk dress, with pink roses in her hair; Mrs. Thompson, the wife of the Secretary of the Interior, wore a pink silk dress with lace flounces, and a head-dress of pink flowers; Madame Sartiges, the wife of the French Minister, wore a rich chene silk, and was accompanied with her niece, dressed in pink tarlatan; Madame Stoeckl, the wife of the Russian Minister, looked as stately as a queen and beautiful as a Hebe in a dress of white silk, with black lace flounces, cherry-colored flowers, and gold beads; Miss Schambaugh, of Philadelphia, who was called the handsomest woman in the United States, wore a white-flounced tarlatan dress trimmed with festoons of dark chenille, with a head-dress of red japonicas; Mrs. Pendleton, the wife of the



MISS HARRIETT LANE.

Representative from the Cincinnati District, wore a white silk skirt with a blue tunic trimmed with bright colors; Mrs. McQueen, the wife of a South Carolina Representative, wore a rich black velvet, and Mrs. Boyce, from the same State, wore a lilac silk dress trimmed with black illusion; Mrs. Sickles, wife of the Representative from New York, wore a blue silk dress, with rich point lace flowers, and was accompanied by her mother, who wore a lavender brocade dress, woven with gold and silver flowers, and Miss Woodbury, a daughter of the late Judge Woodbury, wore a black tarlatan dress over black silk, with a head-dress of gilt beads.



SECRETARY J. THOMPSON.

Among the gentlemen present were Lord Napier, Edward Everett, Secretary Thompson, Senator Mason, Representatives Keitt, Miles, Boyce, McQueen, Clingman, and Ward; Captains Ringgold and Goldsborough, of the navy; General Harney and Colonel Hardee, of the army, and a number of others.

The commencement of Mr. Buchanan's Administration was distinguished by the number of social entertainments given in Washington. It was then as in Paris just before the Revolution of 1830, when Talleyrand said to the crafty Louis Philippe, at one of his

Palais Royal balls: "We are dancing on a volcano." The hidden fires of coming revolution were smoldering at the Capitol; but in the drawing-rooms of the metropolis the Topeka Guelphs cordially fraternized with the Lecompton Ghibellines night after night, very much as the lawyers of Western circuits who, after having abused each other all day in bad English, met at night in the judge's room to indulge in libations of bad liquor. Even when Lent came, instead of going to church, in obedience to the chimes of consecrated bells, society kept on with its entertainments.

Among the most prominent houses were those of the Postmaster-General, Mr. Aaron V. Brown, whose wife was assisted by the daughter of her first marriage, Miss Narcissa Sanders. At Secretary Thompson's a full-length portrait of "Old Hickory," by Sully, kept watch and ward of the refreshment table. The connected houses occupied by Secretary Cass, afterward the Arlington Hotel, were adorned with many rare works of art, brought by him from the Old World. Senators Gwinn, of California, Thompson, of New Jersey, and Clay, of Alabama, with Governor Aiken, of South Carolina, also entertained frequently and generously. At the supper-tables wild turkeys, prairie-hens, partridges, quails, reed birds, chicken and lobster salads, terrapin, oysters, ice-creams and confectionery were furnished in profusion, while champagne, sherry, and punch were always abundant.

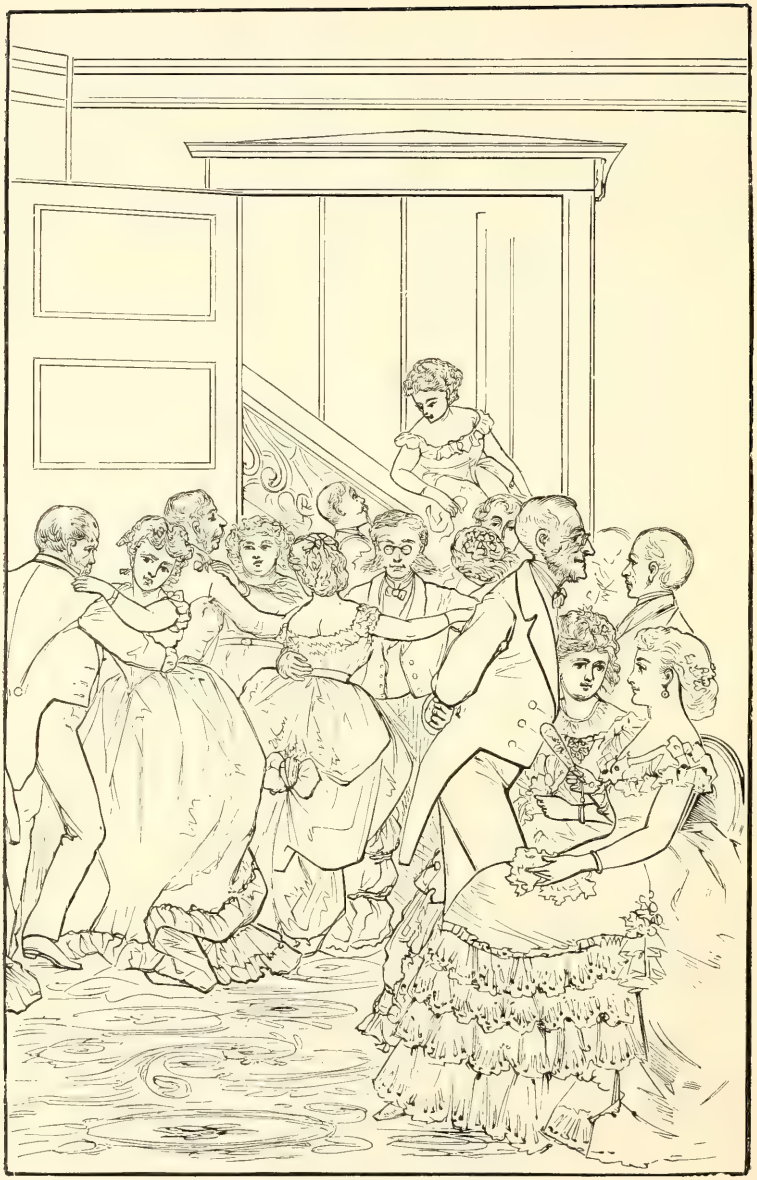
Among choice bits of scandal then afloat was one at the expense of a lady who prided herself on the exclusiveness of the society which graced her *salons*. A *double-distilled-F.-F.-V.*, no one could obtain invitations to her parties whose *ecusson* did not bear the quartering of some old family, and thus these enter-

tainments were accused of resembling the tournaments of ancient times, to which the guests were led, not from any prospect of amusement, but merely to prove their right to *ennuyer* themselves *en bonne compagnie*. Foreigners, however, were always welcome, and one of the "pets," a romantic looking young Frenchman, who was quite handsome and made a great sensation in fashionable society, avoided the Legation as representing a usurper, and therefore quite unworthy the attention of one like himself, of the "vieille roche." The young man, enveloping himself somewhat in mystery, assumed the dignity of Louis Quatorze in his earlier days, and his decisions on all fashionable matters were law. Where he lived no one exactly knew, as his letters were left in Willard's card-basket, but his aristocratic protector persuaded Gautier to let her look at the furnaces of his restaurant-kitchen, and there—must it be said?—she found M. le Compte, in white apron and paper cap, constructing a *mayonnaise*. "This young man is my best cook," said Gautier, but the lady did not wait to receive his salutations.



A SURPRISING DISCOVERY.

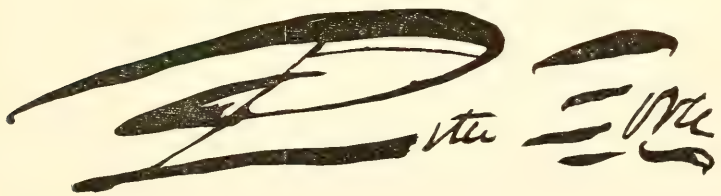
The wild hunt after office was kept up during the



AN ASSEMBLY IN BUCHANAN'S TERM.

summer and fall after Mr. Buchanan's inauguration, fortunate men occasionally drawing place-prizes in the Government lottery, One of the best jokes about applicants for office was told at the expense of a Bostonian, who presented, among other papers, a copy of a letter to Mr. Buchanan from Rufus Choate, with a note stating that he sent a copy because he knew that the President could never decipher the original, and he had left blanks for some words which he could not himself transcribe.

Governor Geary had returned from Kansas, disgusted with the condition of things there, and had been replaced as Governor by Robert J. Walker, who was expected to play the part of "wrong's redresser," as the Prince did in Verona when called to settle the difficulties between the Montagues and the Capulets.



PETER FORCE was born at Passaic Falls, N. J., November 26th, 1790; became a printer and journalist at Washington; collected and published many volumes of American documentary history; was Mayor of Washington, 1836–1840; died at Washington, D. C., January 23d, 1868

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### PRELUDE TO THE REBELLION.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SENATE—JOHN SLIDELL, OF LOUISIANA—SENATOR DOUGLAS OPPOSES THE ADMINISTRATION—BEN WADE'S BON MOT—MEETING OF THE HOUSE—ELECTION OF SPEAKER—INVESTIGATION OF THE WOLCOTT ATTEMPT AT BRIBERY—DEBATES ON THE ADMISSION OF KANSAS—NOCTURNAL ROW IN THE HOUSE—THE NORTH VICTORIOUS.

GENERAL THOMAS J. RUSK, United States Senator from Texas, who had fought bravely at the battle of San Jacinto, had committed suicide during the summer. He had been elected President *pro tempore* of the Senate, and the Senate elected as his successor Senator Fitzpatrick, of Alabama, a tall, fine-looking man, whose wife was a great favorite in Washington society. He received twenty-eight votes, Mr. Hamlin receiving nineteen votes, and voting himself for Mr. Seward, which showed the Republican strength in the Senate to be twenty.

The leader of the Southern forces in the Senate was Mr. John Slidell, who was born in New York, but found his way, when young, to New Orleans, where he soon identified himself with the Creole population and became noted as a political manager. His organization of the colonization of the Plaquemine Parish, by a steamboat load of roughs from New Orleans, secured the defeat of Henry Clay in Louisiana and virtually prevented his election as President. Wealthy, and without conscientious scruples on political matters he

was well-fitted for the leading position in the formation of the Southern Confederacy, which he obtained; but President Davis took good care to send him abroad, knowing that if he could not rule the Confederacy he would take the first occasion to ruin it. What he lacked in positive intellect he more than made up in prudence, industry, and energy.

Mr. Seward claimed the lead of the Republican Senators, but several of them were not disposed to submit to his dictation. Among the Republican recruits was Zachariah Chandler, of Michigan, who had gone west early in life, and became a leading dry goods merchant at Detroit, where he had won popularity by his business ability, his generous public spirit, and his genial nature. He was over six feet in height, well proportioned, with light brown hair and blue-gray eyes.

On the third day of the session Mr. Douglas gave notice that he would the next afternoon define his position on the Kansas question. The announcement brought crowds to the Senate Chamber. Every Senator was in his seat; every past or present dignitary who could claim a right to "the floor" was there, and the galleries were packed with spectators, Mrs. Douglas prominent among the fairer portion of them. The "Little Giant" was neatly dressed in a full suit of black, and rose to speak at his seat, which was about in the middle of the desks on the right of the President's chair, where the Democrats sat. He spoke boldly and decidedly, though with a studied courtesy toward the President. There was a great difference between the question of popular sovereignty as advocated by Mr. Douglas, and the great question of human freedom for which Mr. Sumner and other Representatives of North-

ern sentiments were stoutly battling. After Mr. Douglas had concluded, Mr. Brown, of Mississippi, congratulated Mr. Henry Wilson on the "new Republican ally," and many other bitter things were said about him by the Southrons, but the *bon mot* of the day was by Senator Wade: "Never," said he, "have I seen a slave insurrection before."

There was a large attendance at the organization of the House, when the roll-call showed that two hundred and twenty-five were present. Then Mr. Phelps gracefully moved that the House proceed to the election of a Speaker, thereby showing that he was not a candidate. Mr. Jones nominated James L. Orr, of South Carolina; Governor Banks nominated Galusha A. Grow; and H. W. Davis was nominated but withdrawn. The election was then commenced *vive voce*, the clerk calling the roll. Colonel Orr had one hundred and twenty-eight votes, and was declared elected.



JOHN SLIDELL.

Governor Banks and A. H. Stephens were appointed a committee to conduct the Speaker-elect to the chair. He then delivered a brief, sensible address, after which he was approached by the patriarchal Giddings, who handed him a small Bible and administered the oath of office, which duty devolves on the oldest Representative. The Sergeant-at-Arms elevated his mace—that "bauble"

of authority so distasteful to the Puritans—and the Speaker began to swear in the members State by State.

Among investigations ordered was one into an alleged attempt at bribery by Lawrence, Stone & Co., when the tariff bill was under consideration, which disclosed the fact that they had paid fifty-eight thousand dollars to Colonel Wolcott, who came to Washington as a representative of the Massachusetts manufacturers. Colonel Wolcott, when brought before the House, declined to make the desired revelations, and he was locked up in the Washington Jail—a miserable old building. Those Representatives who were believed to have received some of this money were naturally uneasy, and undertook to intimate that the Colonel had pocketed the whole of it. He philosophically submitted to the decree of the House, occupying the jailer's sitting-room —a cheerful apartment, with a good fire, bright sunshine coming in at the windows. He had numerous visitors, his meals were sent him from a restaurant, and he certainly did not appear to suffer seriously from his martyrdom.

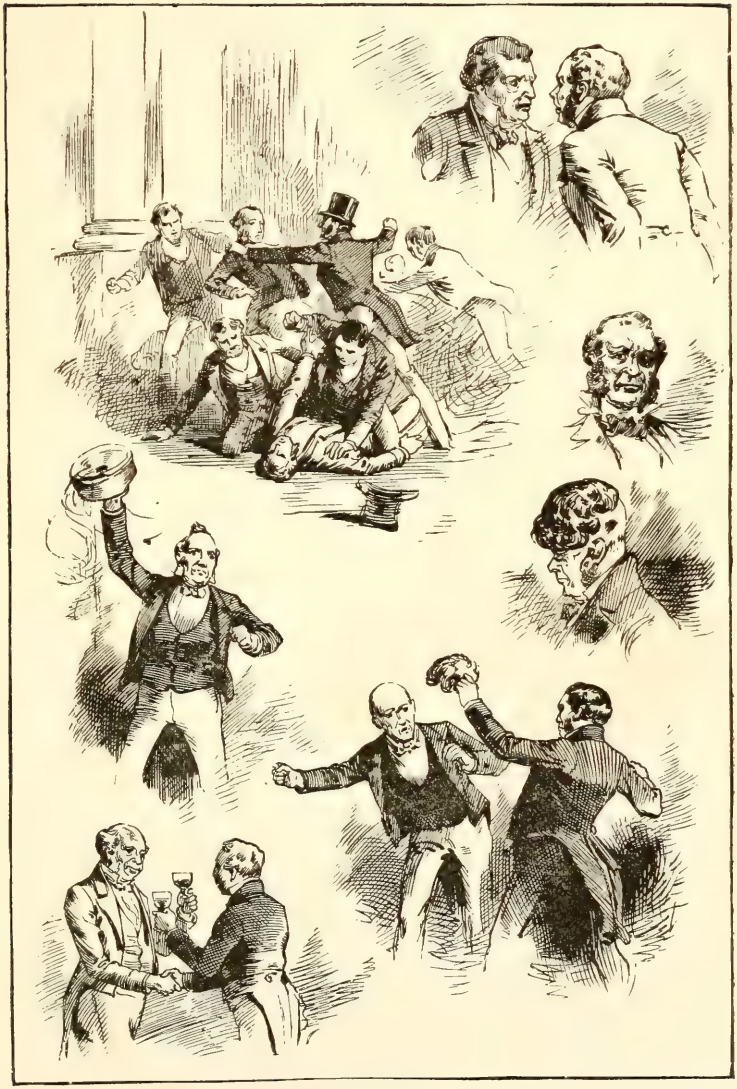
In the exciting debates on the admission of Kansas, Senators Sumner, Wilson, Fessenden, and Seward were positive in their denunciation of the use of Federal troops for the enforcement of the laws, which encouraged the Southern Senators in their belief that the secession of a State would not be forcibly opposed. "The Senate," said Henry Wilson, "insists that the President shall uphold this usurpation—these enactments—with the bayonet. Let us examine the acts of these usurpers which Senators will not repeal; which they insist shall be upheld and enforced by the sabres of the dragoons." Said William H. Seward: "When you hear me justify the despotism of the Czar of Rus-

sia over the oppressed Poles, or the treachery by which Louis Napoleon rose to a throne over the ruins of the Republic in France, on the ground that he preserves domestic peace among his subjects, then you may expect me to vote supplies of men and money to the President that he may keep the army in Kansas." Ben Wade was equally severe on the use of the army, declaring "that the honorable business of a soldier had been perverted to act as a petty bailiff and constable to arrest and tyrannize over men."



HENRY WILSON.

The racket in the House of Representatives commenced with a struggle as to whether the President's Message or the Lecompton Constitution of Kansas should be referred to the Democratic Committee on Territories or to a select committee of fifteen. The session was protracted into the night, and after midnight but few spectators remained in the galleries. Those Representatives who could secure sofas enjoyed naps between the roll-calls, while others visited committee-rooms, in which were private supplies of refreshments. About half-past one, Mr. Grow, of Pennsylvania, then standing on the Democratic side of the House, objected to General Quitman's making any remarks. "If you are going to object," shouted Mr.



INCIDENTS OF THE FIGHT BY NIGHT.

Keitt, of South Carolina, "return to your own side of the hall." Mr. Grow responded: "This is a free hall, and every man has a right to be where he pleases." Mr. Keitt then came up to Mr. Grow and said: "I want to know what you mean by such an answer as that." Mr. Grow replied: "I mean just what I say; this is a free hall, and a man has the right to be where he pleases." "Sir," said Mr. Keitt, "I will let you know that you are a black Republican puppy." "Never mind," retorted Mr. Grow, "I shall occupy such place in this hall as I please, and no negro-driver shall crack his whip over me." The two then rushed at each other with clinched fists. A dozen Southerners at once hastened to the affray, while as many anti-Lecompton men came to the rescue, and Keitt received—not from Grow, however—a blow that knocked him down. Mr. Potter, of Wisconsin, a very athletic, compactly built man, bounded into the centre of the excited group, striking right and left with vigor. Washburne, of Illinois, and his brother, of Wisconsin, also were prominent, and for a minute or two it seemed as though we were to have a Kilkenny fight on a magnificent scale. Barksdale had hold of Grow, when Potter struck him a severe blow, supposing that he was hurting that gentleman. Barksdale, turning around and supposing it was Elihu Washburne who struck him, dropped Grow, and struck out at the gentleman from Illinois. Cadwallader Washburne, perceiving the attack upon his brother, also made a dash at Mr. Barksdale, and seized him by the hair, apparently for the purpose of drawing him "into chancery" and pommeling him to greater satisfaction. Horrible to relate, Mr. Barksdale's wig came off in Cadwallader's left hand, and his right fist expended itself with tremendous force against the unresisting air.

This ludicrous incident unquestionably did much toward restoring good nature subsequently, and its effect was heightened not a little by the fact that in the excitement of the occasion Barksdale restored his wig wrong-side foremost.

The Speaker shouted and rapped for order without effect. The Sergeant-at-Arms stalked to the scene of battle, mace in hand, but his "American eagle" had no more effect than the Speaker's gavel. Owen Lovejoy and Lamar, of Mississippi, were pawing each other at one point, each probably trying to persuade the other to be still. Mr. Mott, the gray-haired Quaker Representative from Ohio, was seen going here and there in the crowd. Reuben Davis, of Mississippi, got a severe but accidental blow from Mr. Grow, and various gentlemen sustained slight bruises and scratches. A Virginia Representative, who thought Montgomery, of Pennsylvania, was about to "pitch in," laid his hand upon his arm to restrain him, and was peremptorily ordered to desist or be knocked down. Mr. Covode, of Pennsylvania, caught up a heavy stoneware spittoon, with which to "brain" whoever might seem to deserve it, but fortunately did not get far enough into the excited crowd to find an appropriate subject for his vengeance; and all over the hall everybody was excited for the time.

Fortunately, it did not last long, and no weapons were openly displayed. When order was restored several gentlemen were found to present an excessively tumbled and disordered appearance, but there remained little else to recall the excitement. Gentlemen of opposite parties crossed over to each other to explain their pacific dispositions, and that they got into a fight when their only purpose was to prevent a fight. Mu-

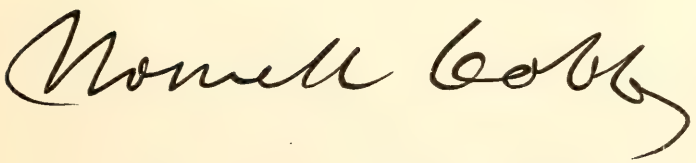
tual explanations and a hearty laugh at the ludicrous points of the drama were followed by quiet and a return to business. It was finally agreed, about half-past six o'clock on Sunday morning, that the Democrats would permit a vote to be taken on Monday without further debate, delay, or dilatory motion.

When Mr. Orr's mallet rapped the House to order at noon on Monday, only six of the two hundred and thirty-four Representatives were absent, and the galleries were packed like boxes of Smyrna figs. Rev. Dr. Sampson made a conciliatory prayer, the journal was read, two enrolled bills were presented, and then the Speaker, in an unusually earnest tone, stated the question. Tellers had been ordered, and he appointed Messrs. Buffinton, of Massachusetts, and Craige, of North Carolina. "Is the demand for the previous question seconded?"

The imposing form of Buffinton was soon seen making his way down to the area before the Speaker's table, where Craige met him. The two shook hands, and there was then a quick obedience to the Speaker's request that gentlemen in favor of the motion would pass between the tellers. Father Giddings, crowned with silvery locks, led the Republican host down to be counted. Burlingame followed, and among others who filed along were Henry Winter Davis, General Spinner, John Sherman, General Bingham, Frank Blair, the trio of Washburnes, Gooch, Schuyler Colfax, John Covode, Governor Fenton, Senator Cragin, and burly Humphrey Marshall. When all had passed between the tellers Buffinton wheeled about and reported to the Speaker, who announced the result rather hesitatingly: "One hundred and ten in the affirmative. Those opposed will now pass between the tellers."

Then the Southern Democrats, with their Northern allies, came trooping down, headed by the attenuated Stephens. Dan Sickles and John Cochrane, who were afterward generals in the Union armies, were then allied with Zollicoffer, Keitt, and others, who fell in the Confederate ranks, and there were so many of them that the result appeared doubtful. At last it was Mr. Craige's turn to report, and then all was silent as the grave.

The Speaker's usually loud, clear voice hesitated as he at last announced: "One hundred and four in the negative. The ayes have it, and the demand for the previous question is seconded. Shall the main question be now put?" The main question was next put, and the vote by ayes and nays on a reference of the Kansas question to the Committee on Territories, was ayes, 113; nays, 114. Then came the vote on the reference to a select committee of fifteen, and Speaker Orr had to announce the result, ayes, 114; nays, 111. The North was at last victorious.



HOWELL COBB was born at Cherry Hill, Ga., September 7th, 1815; graduated at Franklin College, 1834; was Representative from Georgia, 1843–1851 and 1855–1860; was chosen Speaker, 1849; was Governor of Georgia, 1851; was President of the Confederate Congress, 1861; died in New York city, October 9th, 1868.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### POLITICIANS, AUTHORS AND HUMORISTS.

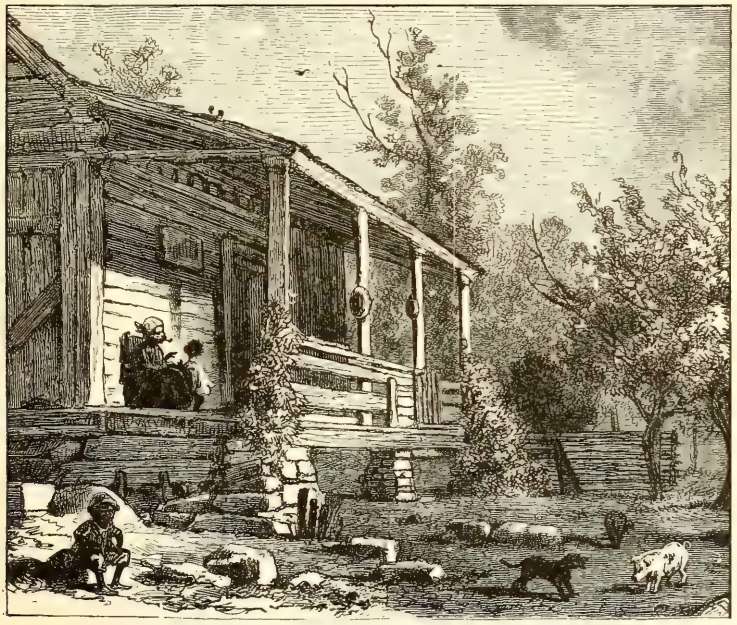
WADE, OF OHIO—JEFFERSON DAVIS, OF MISSISSIPPI—JOHNSON, OF ARKANSAS—ANTHONY, OF RHODE ISLAND—TROLLOPE, OF ENGLAND—ONE OF MIKE WALSH'S JOKES—ALBERT PIKE'S WAKE—THE SONS OF MALTA.

BLUFF BEN WADE, a Senator from Ohio, was the champion of the North in the upper house during the prolonged debates on the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. Dueling had long been regarded as a lost art in the Northern States, but Mr. Wade determined that he would accept a challenge should one be sent him, or defend himself should he be attacked. But no one either assaulted or challenged him, although he gave his tongue free license.

One day Senator Badger spoke plaintively of slavery from a Southern point of view. In his childhood, he said, he was nursed by an old negro woman, and he grew to manhood under her care. He loved his "old black mammy," and she loved him. But if the opponents of the Kansas-Nebraska bill were triumphant, and he wished to go to either of those Territories, he could not take his "old black mammy" with him. Turning to Mr. Wade, he exclaimed: "Surely, you will not prevent me from taking my old black mammy with me?" "It is not," remarked the Senator from Ohio, dryly, "that he cannot take his old black

mammy with him that troubles the mind of the Senator, but that if we make the Territories free, he cannot sell the old black mammy when he gets her there."

The future leader of the Great Rebellion, Senator Jefferson Davis, had then assumed the leadership of the Southern Senators and their Northern allies. His best friends were forced to admit that his bearing, even



AN OLD-TIME "MAMMY" IN HER OLD-TIME HOME.

toward them, had become haughty, and his manners imperious. His thin, spare figure, his almost sorrowful cast of countenance, composed, however, in an invariable expression of dignity, gave the idea of a body worn by the action of the mind, an intellect supporting in its prison of flesh the pains of constitutional disease, and triumphing over physical confinement and

affliction. His carriage was erect—there was a soldierly affectation, of which, indeed, the hero of Buena Vista gave evidence through his life, having the singular conceit that his genius was military and fitter for arms than for the council. He had a precise manner, and an austerity that was at first forbidding; but his voice was always clear and firm. Although not a scholar in the pedantic sense of the term, and making no pretensions to the doubtful reputation of the sciolist, his reading was classical and varied, his fund of illustration large, and his resources of imagery plentiful and always apposite.

Senator Robert W. Johnson—"Bob Johnson," every one called him—had made many friends while a member of the House, and was one of the most popular Senators. He was a man of generous feeling, honorable impulses, and a cheerful humor, which had endeared him to the homely backwoodsmen of his State. He was a fine speaker, pouring forth fact and argument with an earnestness that riveted attention, and lighting up the dull path of logic with the glow of his captivating fancy, while he spiced his remarks with the idiosyncrasies of frontier oratory, familiar and quaint illustrations, and blunt truths. At heart he loved the Union, but he could not stand up against the public sentiment of his State.

Henry Bowen Anthony was the first Republican Senator who had not been identified with the Abolitionists. Before he had been a week in the Senate, he was graciously informed that the Southern Senators recognized him as a gentleman, and proposed to invite him to their houses. "I can enter no door," sturdily replied the man of Quaker ancestry, "which is closed against any Northern Senator." Mr. Anthony was at

that time a very handsome man, with jet black hair, blue eyes, and a singularly sweet expression of countenance. His editorial labors on the Providence *Journal* had given him a rare insight into men and politics, which qualified him for Senatorial life. He was soon a favorite in Washington society, wit and general information embellishing his brilliant conversation, while his social virtues gave to his life a daily beauty.

Ostensibly to negotiate a postal treaty, but really to see what could be done about an international copyright between Great Britain and the United States, came Anthony Trollope, Esq. He was a short, stout old gentleman, with a round, rosy face and snow-white hair, who loved to talk, and who talked well. His mother, Mrs. Frances Trollope, had written a cruelly sarcastic book on the manners and customs of Americans in 1830, and he was somewhat dogmatic in his criticisms of what he saw and heard. He shone especially at gentlemen's evening parties, at which he narrated anecdotes about Macaulay, Dickens, and Thackeray, and of his own exploits in "'unting," which he regarded as the noblest of all pastimes.

Mike Walsh was not only a demagogue, but an incorrigible joker. He used frequently to visit Washington after the expiration of his Congressional term, and was in the city after the close of the summer session of the Thirty-fifth Congress. Judge Douglas was also there, busily engaged in advancing his Presidential prospects. One evening, as Walsh was sitting in front of the Kirkwood House, he remarked that the weather looked threatening, but that he hoped it would prove good on account of the serenade that was to be given to Judge Douglas that night. The thing took at once, and he visited all the hotels, and in casual conversa-

tions broached the serenade, and the fact that the Marine Band had been engaged for the occasion. When ten o'clock P. M. came there were not less than six or seven hundred people in front of Judge Douglas's new residence; and as the streets had been newly opened and were still unpaved, the mud was ankle-deep. There were also some thirty or forty hacks and a number of private carriages; and as the Judge and his beautiful and accomplished wife had heard of the intended ovation, they had prepared for the emergency by taking up the parlor carpets and setting out a collation for the sovereigns. But, alas! no Marine Band appeared; and as eleven o'clock came and no music, the crowd began slowly to thin out, until at last it got whispered around that Mike Walsh had something to do with the getting up of the serenade, when, amid curses and loud guffaws, there was a general stampede of the crowd.

In the midst of the stormy debates at the Capitol, there was an entertainment where men of both sections fraternized. It was a "wake" at the house of Mr. John Coyle, the cashier of the *National Intelligencer*, whose Milesian blood had prompted him to pay Hibernian honors to the memory of one who had often been his guest. The funereal banquet had been postponed, however, in true Irish style, when it had been ascertained that the deceased was not dead, and in due time the guests were again invited, to honor him whom they had mourned—Albert Pike, of Arkansas. There he was, with stalwart form, noble features, waving hair, and a patriarchal beard—at once the Kit North and the Körner of America.

After a neat welcome by the host, uprose the erudite dignitary of the State Department, and he read, in

deep, full tones, an obituary sketch of the supposed deceased, which he had prepared upon the receipt of the sad news. Pike's remarks, in reply, were touchingly beautiful, especially when he expressed his delight at having read kind notices of himself from those whom he had feared were his enemies, and his hopes that all enmity between him and his fellow-men might remain buried in that tomb to which he had been consigned.



THE WAKE AT COYLE'S—RESPONSE OF THE CORPSE.

Jack Savage then sang a song (to the tune of "Benny Havens, O!"), describing a forced visit of "the fine Arkansas gentleman" to the Stygian shore, where he craved permission of Pluto to return to earth for one night at Coyle's :

"'Are you not dead?' the King then said. 'Well, what of that?' said he,
'If I am dead, I've not been waked, and buried dacently.'

'And why,' the monarch cried, 'desire again to share life's toils?'
'For the sake of one good frolic more, even at Johnny Coyle's.'
One spree at Johnny Coyle's; one spree at Johnny Coyle's;
And who would not be glad to join a spree at Johnny Coyle's?"

Pluto then enumerated the good cheer and good company, and "Horace and Anacreon in vain would have him stay." But the gentleman from Arkansas demonstrated that they were all surpassed at Johnny Coyle's. The recital of the genial qualities of various gentlemen named enlisted Prosperine, who urged Pluto to let him go, that he might return, bringing his friends with him.

"And so the Queen at last prevailed, as women always do,
And thus it comes that once again this gentleman's with you;
He's under promise to return, but that he means to break,
And many another spree to have besides the present wake.
One spree at Johnny Coyle's, etc."

This song was followed by a story, and that story by a song, and it was nearly daylight in the morning before the guests separated.



GEORGE BANCROFT was born at Worcester, Mass., October 3d, 1800; graduated at Harvard College, 1817; was Secretary of the Navy under President Polk, 1845–1846; was Minister to Great Britain, 1846–1849; to Prussia, 1867–1871; to Germany, 1871–1874.

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